

NEW YORK Saturday Star Journal

A Popular Paper FOR PLEASURE & PROFIT

Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1873, by BRADLE AND ADAMS, in the office of the Librarian of Congress, at Washington.

Vol. III.

E. F. Beadle,
William Adams,
David Adams,
PUBLISHERS.

NEW YORK, MARCH 8, 1873.

TERMS IN ADVANCE: One copy, four months, \$1.00
One copy, one year, 3.00.
Two copies, one year, 5.00.

No. 156.

GOLDEN.

BY E. NORMAN GUNNISON.

Oh, young and fair!
Oh, sweet and rare!
The sun went past the hedges,
And rested on the horizon dim,
And touched with gold its edges.

Through purple bars
The light of stars
Came down—the sunset over—
And softened with their mellow rays
The fields of new-mown clover.

On toward the lane
The loaded wain
Came creaking through the meadow;
Now touched with light—and then again
One-half concealed by shadow.

Along the hill
The night-bird's trill
Came laden down with sweetness,
The tints of gray across the sky
Made up the scene's completeness.

Just by the hedge,
Across whose edge
Her hair hung burnished golden,
A maiden listened to her swain
Repeat the story olden.

The old, old tale:
The serpent's trail
Can never, never cover:
Since Mother Eve came on this earth
Each maid has had her lover.

And so they stood,
While over wood
And vale the night-shades darkened;
And as the midnight grew apace,
The angels paused and hearkened.

Oh, heart of youth!
Oh, heart of truth!
Taking love's all—and giving:
With your unsought philosophy
Pointing the truth o' living.

In coming days
When life's strange maze
Your feet may tread together,
Ye may not find its pathways tread
Through fields of blooming heather.

The warp and woof
Of life, forsooth
Some dark threads twine in weaving;
The hand that guides the shuttle's course
May test your soul's believing.

But when life's page
Marks for you—age,
And silver threads with golden,
Still other lives beside the hedge
Shall tell the story olden.

The Beautiful Forger:

OR,
THE ADVENTURES OF A YOUNG GIRL.

BY MRS. E. F. ELLETT,
AUTHOR OF "MADEIRINE'S MARRIAGE," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER IV.

THE DISSOLVING REVELATION.

DR. MERLE was convinced by the report of his assistant of the evil intentions of his disguised visitor. But he was puzzled how to prevent the intended crime. He could not denounce her to the authorities without proof, and that he could not furnish beyond his own word and conjecture. He could only try to work on her fears by presenting himself in the character which popular superstition ascribed to him; that of a magician possessing powers beyond ordinary human knowledge.

Anticipating a second visit, he made his assistant, who was a capital draughtsman, prepare a sketch from memory of the scene he had witnessed the preceding night. This was completed in a couple of hours; all but the lady's face. Her strange eyes had so bewildered Ulric that he had not taken careful note of her features. The sick man's face, the bed and table; the toilet, and figure of Louise, and the expression of fright upon her face, were accurately portrayed.

Merle was busy all the morning arranging his apparatus to produce an illusory scene.

In the afternoon a lady was announced by the housekeeper. Dr. Merle showed her into the study himself. When she removed her veil, strange features were disclosed.

She came, however, from the doctor's visitor of the preceding evening. The vial of medicine, she said, had been accidentally broken, and she had been sent for more.

The doctor asked if the patient had taken any, and what its effect had been.

She believed he had taken some, and it had sent him into a quiet sleep. So her mistress had told her.

"Was he asleep at the time of the accident?"

"I think so, sir."

"Now, look you, my good woman," observed the physician, sternly regarding her; "I know exactly what took place at that time. Take a seat, and I will show you."

He fastened a sheet across the lower end of the room.

"Now, look at the picture that will presently appear."

A pale glimmer, like lamplight, began to appear on the sheet. In a few minutes the entire scene of the previous night was reproduced.



He threw himself on the ground at the lady's feet, removed his hat, and looked up in her face.

All was just as you have seen it, when the bottle was broken. You can not deceive me!"

The girl's hands were clasped and unclasped in the extremity of terror. "Oh, sir," she exclaimed, "I did not mean to deceive you! But my mistress—"

"Nor can she deceive me, in any thing," said the doctor, emphatically. "Go, now; and tell Mrs. Paul Sloman she must come herself for the medicine. I will give it only to her."

He waved his hand in dismissal. The young woman, still trembling, turned to leave the room. She had hardly reached the entrance, when the front door was opened for some one.

It was a man scarcely yet of middle age, habited as a priest. The garb of a minister of the church was in those days more distinctive and picturesque than now. His eyes met those of the departing visitor for an instant; but Dr. Merle was close behind her, and while a cordial greeting was exchanged between the two men, the girl, hastily wrapping her cloak about her, walked rapidly from the house.

When she reached a shaded spot among some trees at a little distance, she stopped her almost flight, threw herself on the ground, and covered her face with her hands.

She did not hear the rustling of footsteps, nor see the figure slowly approaching. When she heard her name pronounced softly by some one close to her, she started, and looked up. Then she gave a low shriek, and sprang to her feet.

"You know me?" asked the priest; for it was he who had followed her.

"Antoine!" she gasped.

"Sit down, Louise, on this log. You are pale and trembling! Are you not glad to see me?"

"Oh, Antoine!"

"Father Hamill, you must call me. We are no longer as we were in Provence, five years ago, Louise."

"Five years!" echoed the girl, catching her breath like a sob.

"And then you and I loved each other, Louise; but poverty separated us. Now all is changed. My home is still a poor one, but I am vowed to the service of the church, and am sent here as a missionary."

"How did you know where I—?" began the girl, recovering her composure.

"I knew nothing till I saw you at Dr. Merle's."

"I knew you at once, Antoine."

"You must call me Father Hamill. Tell me now, Louise, what you have done since we parted."

The girl looked down as she replied: "When I lost my home by my aunt's death, I entered the service of a young married lady—Madame Sloman."

"Had she not led a wild life in Paris?"

"She was but young when she married; and she came with Mr. Sloman to America."

"Bringing you?"

"Yes; I was her maid. I had not a franc for my own support. I was obliged to enter a service."

"You were the daughter of honest parents, Louise, and should have chosen the association of those in good repute."

"Madame made me excellent offers, Antoine—I beg pardon—Father Hamill—and her husband is a worthy man."

"It is said, Louise, that the house of Madame Sloman is the resort of suspicious characters."

"I do not believe, Father Hamill, that she means to do wrong. She is ambitious, and must have subordinates to work out her plans."

be at that hour in the lane half a mile from Sloman's house.

"I will see you then, and give you counsel," said the priest. "Perhaps I may help you to employment. I shall not rest till you are settled as you ought to be. Good-by, now."

He spread out his hands, as if in benediction, over the girl's head, without touching her, and then turned back. Louise watched him till he was out of sight, and then went and unfurnished her horse.

Toward sunset, next day, Mrs. Paul Sloman again visited Dr. Merle's house, as commanded by the physician. She rode, as was the custom both for men and women; carriages being a luxury afterward introduced into common use; but she was attired as became a lady of condition. She wore a riding habit of dark-green cloth, fitting closely her tall figure of exquisite symmetry. A hat of the same color, made of rich velvet and adorned with a single long plume, rested on her head over a braided mass of raven hair. There was a rich color in her olive cheek, and her magnificent eyes were gloriously bright.

She had laughed to scorn the tale brought her by her frightened attendant. The idea of magic—of a scene produced by supernatural means; of a pretended knowledge by Dr. Merle of the secrets of her house! Such pretenses might terrify a stupid serving-woman, but could not impose upon her! As she rode fearlessly to the doctor's door, she resolved to teach the presuming *medicastro* his duty, and the danger of impertinent interference with those higher in station than himself.

Ulric saw her as she alighted, but took pains not to show himself. It was important she should not recognize in the doctor's assistant the spy who had been secreted in her chamber. He hurried in to give Margaret notice, and went to call his master, who had gone to the little hamlet a couple of miles or so distant.

Margaret desired the lady to walk into

the parlor, served her with a cup of fresh water, and answered her numerous questions. In a few moments Mrs. Sloman had obtained all the information she desired about the physician's family, his residence in his present home, his probable length of stay, and that he had a daughter. She demanded to see Miss Merle.

Margaret informed her young mistress that she was asked for, and in a few minutes Helen came into the parlor.

Mrs. Sloman gave her own name, and said she had called as much to see Miss Merle as her father. She was surprised in her own mind to find a maiden so refined and lovely in so poor a house. She talked with the girl, and found her cultivated as well as beautiful. With all the tact she possessed, she strove to interest Helen in her conversation, and succeeded so well, that by the time Dr. Merle arrived, the two ladies were engaged in as animated a colloquy as if they had been long acquainted with each other.

Dr. Merle's face clouded as he saw how matters stood. He greeted his visitor coldly, and desired her to walk into his study, without asking his daughter to accompany her.

"You must come to see me, dear, very soon," said the lady, graciously, as she pressed Helen's hand. "Take this visit to yourself, and be sure that you return it."

The doctor frowned, and muttered a negative. He showed the lady into his sanctum with ceremonious deference, and requested her to be seated.

She commenced by laughingly describing the alarm and confusion of her maid at the scene that had been shown her, and asked if it could be seen by herself. She was curious about natural magic, though she had no belief in diabolical agency. There were demons enough in human form for the Prince of Evil to work out his designs with," she said, with a meaning smile.

Dr. Merle fully agreed with her. He replied that he would show her the scene, but refused to answer any of her questions.

The lady took her seat as directed; the sheet was put up, and the study darkened. The scene of the morning was again exhibited. Mrs. Sloman was startled, but she had been prepared for something extraordinary, and had self-control enough not to betray any agitation. She called attention to the fact that her own face was scarcely seen in the picture.

"That can be remedied," said the doctor, gravely, as the picture faded from view.

"Remain here, if you please, madame, and fix your eyes on this round hole in the wall. Afterward I will cast your horoscope."

The lady obeyed his directions, and sat silent and motionless, for some time after Dr. Merle had left the study. By means of mirrors and lenses, a reflection of her face had been thrown on a scene in the adjoining apartment, prepared for oil painting. Ulric was busy sketching the face and putting in the coloring.

It was complete in a few moments, and was a striking likeness. The doctor returned to his study, and showed the portrait to his voluntary sitter.

"This time she was surprised and angry."

"This is no work of magic," she said. "You have had my portrait taken while I sat there. What is your object? What do you mean by this? I gave you no leave. Bring it in and give it to me!"

"Pardon me; I can not part with it."

"What do you mean to do with it?" demanded she, fiercely.

"That depends on circumstances."

"I will not permit you to keep a portrait of me obtained by stratagem."

"You cannot help it, madame. Do not vex yourself needlessly. It depends on your own conduct whether any use is ever made of the portrait; any use which you would not like."

"On my conduct!" This is strange language, sir."

"Would you like me to cast your horoscope, now, madame?" asked the doctor.

"Silence!" cried his visitor. "I do not believe in your power to read the future, any more than in your magical pretensions. You may impose on ignorant valets—not on me! Once more, I command you to bring that portrait!"

"Once more I refuse."

"You dare to defy me?"

"I dare, madame, for you are wholly unmasked. You came to me at first to obtain medicine to work out a foul purpose. I penetrated your mystery, and gave you what would have done no harm, had you administered it to him you wished to destroy. By means I shall never explain, I obtained knowledge of what passed after you left my house. I am fully aware of your plans, and intend to defeat them. You are under the observation of those interested to preserve the peace and safety of the community, and to interfere when it appears that crime is meditated or committed."

"You are bold, sir," muttered the lady, growing deathly white as her white teeth gleamed in a strange smile.

"I am bold in the cause of justice and right. Be you thankful that you are saved from the commission of further wickedness. Your reputation even now is not free from suspicion. Guard it more carefully in future."

"You shall repent this. This—and your sending a spy after me!" his visitor muttered; but she made no further remarks. She gathered up her skirt and quitted the house, without an adieu.

Like a spirit of evil intent on a work of destruction, she sped on her way home.

ward. Her handsome face was dark with passion, her little form was instinct with the strength born of it. There was determination in her compressed mouth, and a dangerous flash in her eyes.

Dusk had fallen as she reached the lane turning off from the main road by which she was going to her own house. She let her horse moderate his pace, and rode on through the shadows that now fell darkly across the path.

It was yet light enough to see figures; and as she gained a bit of rising ground, two persons appeared, partly in relief against the sky, partly lost in the shade. One she immediately recognized as that of her attendant, Louise. "Whom could she be talking with?"

The man's figure was close to her; speaking, it appeared, confidentially. Now the girl clasped both her hands and looked upward, as if making some promise or vow. Then his hands were stretched toward her, as in farewell or benediction, and in a moment he turned away and disappeared.

CHAPTER V. THE WELCOME GUEST.

OLIVIA SLOMAN urged her horse forward, and as the distance rapidly lessened between her and the girl's figure, she caught sight of another masculine form advancing toward the girl. It was a tall, large-framed man, of majestic bearing. A keen pang of jealousy shot through Olivia's soul. "What can he have to say to her? Does she meet him in secret?"

The conference between the new-comer and Louise had continued but a minute or two ere Olivia had dashed up to them. She gave a merry laugh, as if pleased to have startled them, but did not fail to notice that Louise looked confused and guilty.

The girl caught the look her mistress flung at her, and hung her head, turning away.

"Mrs. Sloman! I am fortunate not to miss you!" cried the gentleman she had called Victor Ormsley, as he came with outstretched hands to greet her. The transformation on Olivia's face was remarkable. She smiled graciously; her eyes sparkled, and she gave the gentleman a jubilant welcome.

"You were on the way to my house?" she said.

"I have just been there, Mrs. Sloman."

"You are formal, sir."

"Olivia, then—since you permit me to call you so, I have called to say good-by, perhaps for a few weeks."

"Good-by! Why, where are you going?"

"I have to go East on some business, and may not return in a month or two, though I may in a few days. I am very glad to see you; I would not have missed you for a great deal. I have seen Paul, and I hope he is beginning to grow better."

"You may go on to the house, Louise," said the lady; "and stay, take my horse; I will walk the rest of the way."

She leaped from the horse and gave the bride to the girl, with another searching look. Louise took the bride and went on, leading the animal.

"You had not been long speaking with her?" she asked of the gentleman, when the girl was out of sight.

"Only a moment," he answered.

"Then who was it in such earnest conversation with her before I came up?"

"I do not know. I did not see any one."

"No—he had left her. He went when he heard you coming. It is strange; she does not know any one in this part of the country."

"Perhaps she has a 'follower'!" suggested the gentleman, with a smile.

"No—she has no lovers; I would not permit it."

"You should extend to her the same indulgence, Olivia, that you required when—"

"No, I have seen the folly of such doings. And one never knows with whom one is acquainted in this lawless region."

"True; you are right to be cautious."

"I have no confidence in any one, Victor, but yourself."

"And in Paul," he added, musingly.

"Oh, Paul can do nothing; he is ill all ways. I have to nurse him and take care of him, and he can not take care of me. I trust only in you, Victor." She put her arm within his, as they walked along slowly toward the house.

"You do me honor. I am sorry I can do so little."

"But you have done a great deal. What should we have done without your help; your advances on the mortgages; you have been so generous. We might have starved outright."

"Not a word more! It would be very strange if I should not help Paul a little. We have long been such friends."

"And me—do you not care for me, too, a little?" pleaded the lady, insinuatingly, slightly pressing the arm she held, and looking up into his face with appealing earnestness.

"Certainly; you and Paul both! You know that, Olivia."

Her manner suddenly changed.

"I have a favor to ask of you, Victor," she said, eagerly.

"What is it? You may be sure of anything I can do."

"Let me have the keys of your large warehouse by the river, while you are gone."

"I will. I have them in my saddle-bags in your stable."

"And let no one else come near the place but myself, while I have them, without first coming to me."

"You shall have full sway. You may sell all the grain and iron stored there, if you like."

"I shall do nothing of the kind. But if I want to keep any thing securely myself, the place will be convenient. Are the doors and windows safe?"

"Every window is barred heavily with iron, and the doors are massive and secured by strong bolts. You may defy burglars; no one can get in."

"Or get out, either?" asked Mrs. Sloman.

"Or get out, once inside. The place was a prison in former years; and it has dusty corridors and cells where an army of war captives might be stowed away."

"Who has charge of the building?"

"Old Larry Sterne, the fisherman who lives in the cabin a short distance down the river. He keeps the keys, as a rule, and he always sees to the packing of stores when they come up."

"There is a wharf near, where the boats land?"

"Close to the walls. But I do not expect any more boat-loads at present. You must

use all the produce you want—and don't be afraid of waste."

"How kind you are," she whispered, and again the light pressure on his arm.

"I only wish Paul could go with me," he answered.

They had reached the house, and the lady urged her companion to come in. Supper would soon be ready. She showed him into a parlor, handsomely furnished for the time and locality; well-furnished, indeed, for a more civilized region. There were a piano and guitar, books, music and a few small paintings; there were sofas and lounges; and the carpet was of new and rich pattern. The man-servant had come in from the stable, and he lighted a lamp on a table in the center of the room. Mr. Ormsley took a chair, and looked over some old newspapers, while the lady of the house went to change her riding-dress.

She came in, wearing a fine merino of rich brown color, with white collar and cuffs. Her hair lay in heavy braids coiled around her head, without ornament. Only a brooch of fine-wrought gold incensing single blood-red ruby, fastened the white linen at her throat, and two or three brilliant sparkled on her small white fingers. Her style of dress was subdued; yet nothing could hide the coquettish grace with which she wore it, nor the dark beauty of her face. It was a singular face, full of impetuous expression one moment, impassive and impenetrable the next; it seemed as if an invisible mask were drawn over it at will. There was the luxuriance of a tropical flower in the splendor of her complexion, the vivid contrast of her abundant raven hair, and the paleness of her broad, low forehead. The large black eyes, under straight, thick eyebrows, and shaded by lashes long enough to touch her cheek, looked like springs suddenly revealed under clustering bushes; and they were as unfathomable as those springs shadowed by midnight.

She had glided stealthily into the room, and stood close by Mr. Ormsley, as he was looking over the papers attentively. A glance at him will not be amiss, as he is of some importance to our story.

A tall and stalwart form, a dress of rich material, made in the style then peculiar to gentlemen of the better class, and massive features cast in a grand and noble mold, gave him an air of distinction. He evidently did not belong to this section of country. His complexion was browned by travel and exposure; his hair was grizzled, but he did not seem more than forty years of age. His face bore the deep lines of care or trouble, and it was easy to see that some painful recollection at nearly all times weighed on his spirits.

"How is Paul, now?" he asked, without looking up, as he heard the rustle of Olivia's dress.

"He is better; he will see you again presently; after supper," was her answer.

"But, Victor, I want to ask you something. Is David Ormsley—your brother—still living at your rancho—the hacienda?"

"Yes—of course, he and his family."

"They will remain there all winter?"

"I hope so; I should be sorry to find them gone. The property is not mine; he purchased it to live here. He has landed interests to keep him."

"And you—to whom the other land belongs—"

"Only part of it; and David holds the rest for me. I am a wife, Olivia; I come and go like the wandering wind. The same chance or hope that brought me here, may send me any day to the opposite side of the globe."

"When will you learn to give up visionary schemes?"

"When I have lost strength, means, or the hope of opportunity to make amends for wrong!"

"You have no clew—yet?"

"None. I only know how deeply I sinned; and that no reparation is possible! I deserve all I have suffered! Olivia, pray that you may be called to bear crushing misfortune, no rather than remorse and self-reproach."

"You are too tender of conscience."

"Paul, your husband, first opened my eyes; and for that I owe him everlasting gratitude."

"But he told you nothing! He knew nothing!" cried Olivia, recoiling a step, with her white lips strangely distorted.

"He was rational! I was mad! My best, truest friend! A life's devotion could not repay him."

"Too sentimental!" muttered the lady, in a low, sneering tone. Ormsley looked at her quickly.

She hastened to apologize, and added:

"Was it the part of a friend to inflict torture upon you?"

She put her hand on the back of his chair, and leaned over him tenderly.

"The torture was merited. My want of faith made me a victim. I have but to bear the fate I drew on myself."

"Draw it on yourself?" echoed the clear voice, incredulously.

"Why speak so? What do you dare to insinuate?" exclaimed Ormsley, turning upon her, his brow contracted with a frown, his eyes flashing.

Olivia saw she had offended him.

"Oh, Victor, pray, pray forgive me! I am so confused—How long is it since my husband deceived you, as you said?"

"Twelve years."

"Six years before he married me."

"He had kept the letter two years before he had an opportunity of showing it to me."

"And after he convinced you, you set out—"

"To do what I could in reparation! I have not succeeded; yet, I do not abandon the hope of success."

"And that brought you to California?"

"In part only. I came on my brother's account. It was well I had some one to care for, or I should have gone mad."

"And some one to lavish your money upon?"

"I have done little for David, for he had a competence."

"To have some one to care for! Victor, have you never cared for me?"

She stooped lower, and her hand rested, not on the chair, but on his shoulder. "Did he feel that there was danger in the close neighborhood of those magnetic eyes, now filled with softness, and seeking his own?"

He rose, apologized for being seated while she stood, and drew forward an easy-chair for her.

"Care for you and Paul? Surely, Olivia," he cried, cheerily. "You know that I do. Did not his advice bring me here?"

"And since we came—since Paul fell ill," she said, in a low, gentle tone, "you have been so kind to us!"

"Olivia, have I not begged you never to speak of kindness from me?"

"But I must remember it!" she said, earnestly. "Victor, grant me one favor."

"Certainly; what is it?"

"I have enemies here; I have always had enemies. I have made an unscrupulous one within two hours' ride."

"Who is it?"

"I will not tell you his name; but he is my bitter foe. Promise me not to be prejudiced against me, by any stories that may be brought to you."

"Men are always ready to take away a woman's good name! Remember how it was about—"

"No need to remind me of that!" cried Ormsley, while a spasm of sharp pain convulsed his features.

"Be forbearing with me! Oh, Victor—should people—should any one—try to blacken my name—"

"I assure you, Olivia, I will listen to no tales against you!"

"I could not live if you thought evil of me! And, Victor—dear Victor—I implore you—give me another promise. I wronged you once; you would hate me if you knew what I did! Say that you will forgive me, if you ever find it out!"

Her words gushed forth with passionate force; she flung herself on her knees before him; she clasped his hand in both her own, which were cold as ice itself.

"You speak riddles, Olivia!" he exclaimed, in astonishment. "How did you ever do me wrong?"

"I did; but may I die the moment you discover it! Promise me your pardon, Victor. It is the secret of my life! Promise me your full pardon!"

It was in actual supplication that her eyes were raised to his. He lifted her from the floor, and placed her in the seat.

"It can not have been great harm," he said, in a light tone, "since I know nothing of it. Be at ease; you shall have full forgiveness. Do not weep! See, here is Gilbert to say supper is ready. Then I will go to Paul's room."

Olivia's attachment to this man had been the cord that held her back from perdition. Could it draw her into the sunlight of virtue? We shall see.

CHAPTER VI. THE BANDIT LOVER.

VICTOR ORMSLEY rode away from the house of his friend, Paul Sloman, believing his wife to be a true-hearted woman. He could not see beneath the smiling surface, and discover the scheming wickedness hidden under so fair an exterior.

"Now, come to me, Louise," the lady called, to her maid, as soon as she heard her guest's horse galloping away. "Sit down here, and tell me who it was you were talking with in the lane, just before he came up."

"Indeed, madame—"

"No shirking or shuffling! A man was speaking to you. I saw you both distinctly. He seemed to be saying something particular."

"The girl's face was averted."

"It was Father Hamil," she said.

"The Catholic priest of the rancho?"

"I believe so, madame."

"I did not know you were acquainted with him, or with any other priest."

"I did not know he was one, before I met him by chance in that house, where you sent me for the medicine yesterday."

"Mr. Merle's?"

"You saw him there for the first time? How came you to be so intimate, when I saw you together this evening? Tell me the truth, Louise."

"I will, Mrs. Sloman, for the truth is best," answered the girl, speaking with more courage. "I knew Antoine Hamil many years ago in Provence."

"Ah!"

"Yes; it was before he was a priest. He was only a poor farmer's son."

"And he courted you, Louise?"

"How quick you are to read things, madame!"

"It was so, then?"

"Yes, madame; we were attached to each other."

"What parted you?"

"We were both so very poor. His father sent him away; and I did not see him again."

"Then he became a priest?"

"He was sent to study for one; and when he was able, they sent him here as a missionary."

"Well; and you have renewed your love vows?"

"How can you ask such a question!" exclaimed Louise, impatiently. "Do you not know that a priest can not marry?"

"I had forgotten that."

"Antoine—Father Hamil, is nothing to me."

"Then why do you meet him again?"

"He said he had something to say to me."

"What was it?"

"He wanted to—give me some advice."

"He wished you to leave my service, was not that it?"

Louise looked up astonished. How could the lady discover everything?

"Was not that his advice? You do not deny it."

"He thought it would be better—"

"I understand it all. You can do as you please. I can spare you very well, Louise."

"You have had a good home with me, Louise, and I am not likely to be poorer than we have been. I have the prospect of being much richer. But if you wish, you can leave me. I do not want a spy on my actions."

"A spy, madame! I have never been a spy."

"Nor a judge?"

"I never presumed to judge you."

"Listen to me. The doctor has ordered Paul to go and live on the seaboard. He will soon go to the city, and Peter will attend him."

"You are not going?"

"Not for the present. Some one must see to our affairs here. If you choose to remain with me, you may either stay here, or go with Paul as housekeeper."

"I could not do that, madam."

"Then stay here if you like; but I will have no meetings with that young priest, who dares to censure what I do."

"I shall not see him again."

"That is well. Will you stay, then?"

"I have nowhere else to go," sobbed the girl, covering her face with her hands to conceal her tears.

"Then stay if you like; but do not pre-

sume to question what I do. I have to manage every thing here, and I have to see many persons your priest might not approve. Just do as I bid you and be faithful and silent. You understand?"

"Yes, madame."

"Go, then, and sit in my chamber, to be within call when Paul wakes, and to give him his medicine. I expect to meet a friend—I am going out, and you must see that no one follows me. Take the light."

What could the girl do? Disobey her spiritual adviser she must; was she not driven by necessity?

She went to take her place in the room next to that of the invalid. Her mistress threw on her cloak and fur-lined cap, and went out. Her walk was a long one, and in the opposite direction to the horse-path she had taken through the lane. It led across the plain, by a circuitous route toward a dense piece of woods, at the base of a precipitous bluff.

On the face of a steep pile of rocks was a cavernous opening, called a "pocket," almost entirely concealed by a thick growth of bushes. In the mouth of this a fire was kindled, over which was a frying-pan, half-filled with pork and sea-biscuits stewed—a favorite dish at that period among rangers of the forest. A pot of coffee stood on one side. A man seemed to be superintending preparations for supper. He was unshaven and rudely dressed in loose trousers and long boots, with red flannel undershirt and a sombrero. He started when he saw the approaching figure, then turned toward a thicket, where stood a gray horse just fastened to a sapling by his rider.

This rider had a poncho thrown over his shoulder, where a heavy rifle was slung, and his legs were incased in skins garnished with Mexican spurs. He wore a low-crowned, broad-brimmed hat, and a dark cloth jacket, with blue military trousers and scarlet sash. His features were heavy and his complexion swarthy; his straight black hair hung over a projecting forehead, and his eyes, though small and piercing, were intensely black.

He turned when the other man spoke to him, and advanced to meet the lady. She allowed him to take her hand and lead her a little apart, under the shelter of a large tree, where he flung his cloak over a stone, and motioned her to take the seat.

"I will bring you some coffee," he said.

"You need not. I have taken supper. Who is with you?"

"Only Pedro and the Indian lad. They are out of hearing."

He threw himself on the ground at the lady's feet, removed his hat, and looked up in her face with a pleased expression.

"I am so happy to see you again, Olivia. I hope you have good news?"

"That is as you take it," she answered.

"I have found it impossible to do as you proposed. I can not go with you. I must stay here."

His face darkened with disappointment.

"You must not be angry, Querados. I can do more for you here."

"I will not go without you, my pearl, my star of beauty! What do I care for money or plunder, unless I can have you?"

"I hope you have good news?"

"That is as you take it," she answered.

"I have found it impossible to do as you proposed. I can not go with you. I must stay here."

His face darkened with disappointment.

"You must not be angry, Querados. I can do more for you here."

"I will not go without you, my pearl, my star of beauty! What do I care for money or plunder, unless I can have you?"

"I hope you have good news?"

"That is as you take it," she answered.

"I have found it impossible to do as you proposed. I can not go with you. I must stay here."

His face darkened with disappointment.

"You must not be angry, Querados. I can do more for you here."

"I will not go without you, my pearl, my star of beauty! What do I care for money or plunder, unless I can have you?"

"I hope you have good news?"

"That is as you take it," she answered.

"I have found it impossible to do as you proposed. I can not go with you. I must stay here."

His face darkened with disappointment.

"You must not be angry, Querados. I can do more for you here."

"I will not go without you, my pearl, my star of beauty! What do I care for money or plunder, unless I can have you?"

"I hope you have good news?"

"That is as you take it," she answered.

"I have found it impossible to do as you proposed. I can not go with you. I must stay here."

His face darkened with disappointment.

glancing at her from the corners of his eyes, while the smile on his face became a grin.

"I did not say it was a proposition," Helene answered, frowning slightly. She was sounding him cautiously, and she had placed a golden inducement before the man whose nature she hardly knew yet.

Pedro at once assumed a sober countenance.

"What would I do, my lady? Well, if the offer came from one whose eyes were dark as yours, and whose voice said three thousand dollars, it is possible—"

"Ah, I think I know you, Pedro Gomez!"

He inclined his shaggy head.

"Then you will aid me? You will strike this enemy from my path? For, I will do even more, if you make no mistake. I will sign a document agreeing to give you half my fortune, after fifteen years have elapsed."

He opened his eyes in amazement.

"Or, further," she added, earnestly, "if that does not altogether suit you, I will give you your choice, between half my fortune and my hand in marriage—after fifteen years."

Pedro Gomez stared. He felt his veins warming, and the words of the beautiful girl tingled in his ears.

He was completely deceived by her tone. He believed that it might be possible for him, one day, to possess this lovely creature. While it seemed preposterous, it filled him with rapture.

"Lady," he stammered, "I will do anything you command!"

"It is well. My enemy is to be removed."

"And I will remove her for you?" exclaimed Pedro, whose gaze was still swimming, whose ears were still tingling.

She arose and went to the desk on the small table, from which she obtained a tiny vial.

While she was doing this, Pedro was thinking:

"She is not an angel!—she is all devil! But she is beautiful! I am in love with her!—Pedro Gomez, the dirty gardener! And if I live for fifteen years—she will be my wife, for she has promised to put such an agreement upon paper. Ho! ho! what good luck. And three thousand dollars in cash money! I am rich! I am happy! I will obey her in any thing!"

He was interrupted by Helene, who approached him.

"You see this vial, Pedro Gomez?"

"Yes."

"It contains a deadly poison."

"Yes."

"The way to administer it is by putting three drops early, only three drops—in the center of a rose."

"In the center of a rose," he repeated, paying close attention, and receiving the poisonous vial from her.

"The one who smells of the rose will, at the first inhalation, give a quick start, and look surprised. At the second—which can not be resisted—the effect is to produce drowsiness. Then there must be somebody to grasp and sustain the stricken one, who will be likely to fall, and press the rose close to the nostrils—remember, press the rose close to the nostrils! Can you recollect?"

"Yes, my lady; I have it by heart. But there is danger in all this."

"None. The cause of death can never be traced to the rose. Will you perform the task properly?"

"It shall be done," promised Gomez.

"Swear it!"

"I swear it shall be done!" vowed the Spaniard, sinking to one knee and raising one hand.

"When will you do it?"

"Within one week."

"You do solemnly swear, that, within one week, you will administer poison to my enemy, through the rose?"

"Yes."

"Then you will earn more money by it in one day than you can make with the spade in five years. When it is done I will hear of it without your telling me. Come to me afterward, and you shall have three thousand dollars."

"I think I can trust her," flashed through his mind. "And—by the devil!—if she fooled me, I would make her repent it! But no, she dare not trifle with me. And so beautiful! And, perhaps, after fifteen years, she will be the wife of Pedro Gomez! Excellent fortune! What a rise: from a poor gardener, to the position of a gentleman and the husband of this devil-of-an-angel!"

"Well, Pedro Gomez?" interrogatively, and cutting short his grand painting of mind-pictures.

"Yes, my lady. I was only thinking how generous of you to honor me so—to honor the poor gardener!"

Her red lips curled, and she gazed down on the uncouth form; but he did not see it, for he was bowing lower, and shaking his head from side to side while speaking.

"Get up, Pedro."

"Yes, my lady," and inwardly: "What a sweet voice! If she is ever my wife, she shall sing me to sleep every night!"

Plainly we see that the hint of becoming his wife was a cunning artifice, for he was thoroughly deluded, and ready to do whatever Helene Cerey might wish.

The beauty had other intentions for the future of Gomez, while she played a part now that made him plant in her hands.

"But, lady,"—as it suddenly struck him that the most important part of his instructions had been omitted—"who is it I am to remove from your path, with the deadly rose?"

"Her name is Florose Earncliffe," and as she uttered the name, she fastened her dark orbs in a hard, half-frowning gaze upon his face.

Pedro started back. The vial nearly fell from his clasp, and his swarthy face grew red.

"Lady!"

"Not a word! You have sworn to remove my enemy. That enemy is your young mistress, Florose. Remember your oath! Remember the three thousand dollars!"

"And the beautiful devil who may some day be my wife!" added Pedro, in his own mind, trying, himself, to set aside the scruples which had arisen at mention of Florose.

And between Helene Cerey and himself, he easily quelled any weak feelings that might have possessed him.

Ten minutes later, he left the house.

And Helene Cerey was walking back and forth in her boudoir, smiling in triumph as she pondered on the oath of Gomez to remove her rival.

CHAPTER VII.

CARLOS MENDOZE, THE QUACK.

NIGHT.

Eight o'clock.

With the last stroke of the iron tongue that proclaimed the hour, a carriage rolled away from before the residence of Helene Cerey.

Going from her house, we are right in supposing that its occupant was the plotting, dark-eyed belle.

While she is speeding away, we turn to another locality, to an establishment near the corner of Willow and — streets.

It was a dilapidated affair; a dingy little shop, with one bow window, the frame of which was sunken and rickety, and the contents of which was composed of countless bottles of various sizes, bearing numerous labels of dusty condition. One miserably-spluttering lamp shed a sickly glimmer over the suspicious-looking bottles; and a row of monstrous candles on a shelf inside, served to display the stock of Carlos Mendoze, the Quack.

There were several customers in the store; and old Carlos—a Spaniard, of many years, with pointed features, slim body, of short stature, and wearing a long black ministerial frock-coat—was bowing and bending while he served their wants, and occasionally speaking words of advice.

As the withered old Quack attended to these customers, a carriage whirled past the door—stopping a short distance beyond. In a moment it rumbled on again; and in another moment a new customer entered the shop of Carlos Mendoze. This last was a woman, closely veiled, and attired very plainly.

She did not stop at the counter, but passed straight on, disappearing through a narrow back door.

"Ah!" thought old Carlos, as he gave a momentary glance after the comer; "there is the beautiful belle! She comes again to see Mendoze, the Quack. What does she want this time? I shall learn presently, when these twopenny buyers clear out. Malediction! they spend one dollar, where this beautiful Helene Cerey is paying me hundreds! I have no time for them when she comes. Will they never begone?"

Carlos Mendoze was very anxious to join the visitor who awaited him in the back room. But the customers in his shop annoyed him greatly by standing and talking after they had made their purchases.

When, however, the last one had departed, he made haste to close and lock the door.

Now then!—now then, for my hundred-dollar customer! rubbing his skinny hands together and hurrying toward the back room.

Helene Cerey was seated at a large round table, apparently impatient at his long delay.

"Ah!" he squeaked, "I am sorry you had to wait so long, madam."

We state here that Helene was a wealthy orphan. Also, that it was a habit with Mendoze to call her "madam," for their acquaintance was, by no means, a fresh one.

"I thought you would keep me all night, Carlos Mendoze!"

"Oh, no; not even if I had to drive those ragged buyers off by force. But I am here now, how can I serve Madam Helene Cerey this time?"

"I have found use for the poison I got of you yesterday."

"Ah!" smiling grimly.

"Now I want something else."

"Something else? What is that something else?"

"An asp, Carlos Mendoze—an asp with a poisoned fang!"

"Ho! ho!" exclaimed the Quack, within himself, "she wants an asp! What is she going to do with an asp?" Then aloud: "How did you know I could give you an asp, eh?"

"You are forgetful. I learned it from your own mouth. When I asked you yesterday for poison, you suggested an asp. But I preferred the means of the deadly rose. Now, give me an asp; and, also, give me a drug to produce instant stupor—a drowsiness in which the asp can be applied."

"But these things are very precious," whined old Carlos. "My asps are quite expensive."

"What do you cost?"

"The price is two hundred dollars."

"Bring me one, then, and make haste. Make up the drug, too. I must get away from here. The smell of your bottles sickens me."

The shriveled old Quack started to procure what she wanted—lighting a candle, and descending to the cellar, where he kept the horrible things. And as he went, he was muttering:

"So young, and so beautiful! Yet she is a deep one, for she uses drugs and poisons. Ah! I know what you are at, Helene Cerey. You mean to poison Florose Earncliffe, your rival! You shall pay old Carlos much more money, yet, to keep your secret. I know—I know all about it. You can't conceal it from me! I have my thumb on others, rich as you. But the asp? What can she want with the asp? I will find that out, too."

It was some time before he returned.

He brought her a very small, round box, containing what she desired, and, in a few words, instructed her how to use it.

Next, he compounded the drug for her. And in half an hour, Helene Cerey left the shop. Her carriage had returned; and when she had entered this, and was being borne homeward, Carlos Mendoze stood looking after her—tightly clutching the two hundred and fifty dollars she had paid him.

As the Quack was about to retire from the doorway, a figure approached rapidly, ascended the steps, brushed rudely against him, and passed into the shop.

"Ho! Cortez—you are drunk! Malediction!" he snarled.

"No—malediction!—I am not drunk!" snarled back the figure, continuing on to the rear apartment, and banging the narrow door spitefully.

"Something is the matter with Cortez!" the Quack exclaimed, a little nervously, as he hastened after this new-comer.

In the rear office stood Cortez Mendoze, the son of Carlos. But Cortez, then, was a youth hardly twenty-two years of age.

He was handsomely proportioned; with an attractive face, brilliant eyes, and skin of extraordinary purity—the more extraordinary, because Cortez was addicted to habits of dissipation. There was evidence of great muscular strength in him; and a bearing that showed he well knew of his attractiveness.

On this occasion, his face was glowing as

if with angry emotion, and he was grinding his fine white teeth savagely.

"Malediction!" cried Carlos. "What is it, my boy? You are mad!"

"Yes, I am mad—malediction!" hissed the handsome Cortez—using, it will be seen, the favorite exclamation of his father.

"Be calm, my dear Cortez—be calm. Sit down, and tell me what has happened."

Cortez sat down; but he instantly started up and began striding across the apartment, with clenched fists and scowling brow.

Carlos rung a tiny bell that was upon the table.

The summons brought a negro, who appeared at another door which led to the upper story of the rickety building.

"Bring us some wine, Farak," he said; "and be quick about it."

And when the negro had gone for the wine:

"Sit down, Cortez, my dear boy; tell me what's the matter."

"Matter enough!" growled the young Spaniard. "You know Wart Gomez?"

"Oh, Wart Gomez! the son who quarreled with his father, Pedro, on account of Carline Mandoro!"

"Yes—he who married Carline Mandoro. Malediction!"

"Your old sweetheart."

"Yes."

"But what of Wart Gomez?"

"We quarreled, three days ago."

"Ho! A quarrel with Wart Gomez! Well?"

He met me on the street, and dealt me a blow in the face, because, he said, I had spoken slanderously of his wife, Carline."

"Wart Gomez struck you in the face? Carline?"

"Yes—Carline!" echoed Cortez, with a hiss, and a snap of his teeth.

"Well? Well? What then?"

The father now partook of the excitement of the son.

At that moment Farak brought the wine. When the negro withdrew, Carlos persuaded his son to a seat.

"Now, then, my dear Cortez. What did you do when Wart Gomez struck you?"

"I struck back again!" gulping down a glassful of wine.

"Good! Good!" squeaked the father, rubbing his skinny hands till the knuckles cracked, and seeming highly pleased.

"A challenge followed. He was to have met me to-night, at sunset, to fight with pistols."

"Yes—yes. And you would have shot him!"

"But he did not come! Malediction!" shouted Cortez, smiling the table with his fist.

"Ho! how cowardly!"

"Instead, he sent this note. Read it."

He threw a slip of paper toward his father; and the latter read as follows:

"CORTAZ MENDOZE:

"I shall not meet you. For two reasons, I will not fight you: first, I have a wife and child who depend upon my labor; second, you are not worthy of my anger. WART GOMEZ."

"The coward!" exclaimed Carlos.

"But he shall not escape me! I will have his life! He struck me, and now tries to sneak from the penalty. The blow on my cheek still smartens. Malediction!"

"Yes—malediction!" accepted Carlos, refilling the tumblers. "Since he will not fight you fairly, you must have revenge!"

"And I will have it! Carline!"

"Carline!"—yes."

CHAPTER VIII.

A STRANGE HISTORY.

In a western section of the city was situated the house of Wart Gomez, the son of Pedro.

But there was a vast difference between father and son. The young Gomez was a man of many accomplishments, acquired by himself, and which had obtained him, first, a clerkship at a handsome salary, and, afterward, a position with his employers that was almost a partnership.

In consequence of steady habits, and close attention to business, the young man had saved a great deal of money, and was very comfortable in this world's goods.

He married a beautiful girl, whose name was Carline Mandoro; and the result of this marriage was a quarrel with his father, Pedro Gomez, which led to a separation between them.

Carline's father was a Spaniard—her mother an Englishwoman; and they were well to do, if not rich. It was because of this that Pedro objected to the union, declaring that she was too far above Gomez to become his wife—the wife of a son of a gardener.

But Wart was ambitious; and he stood high in the esteem and confidence of his employers. He won the girl's affections while she was living at a hotel, with her widowed mother—and married her. And the pair were well-mated, for they loved each other fondly.

It was the third night after that on which Helene Cerey visited Mendoze, the quack.

In the parlor of Wart Gomez' snug house, husband and wife and child were assembled—the latter, a girl, four years and three months old. And Zetta, the servant—who was about Carline's own age—was amusing the child, while her master and mistress conversed.

On this evening Carline appeared to be very uneasy. Her eyes glanced restlessly about; her voice was unsteady; and Gomez missed the sunny smile with which she was wont to welcome him, when he returned to his home at nightfall.

"Carline," he said, "you are too sad to-night. You are anxious without good cause. Come—look up and smile; and think no more of Cortez Mendoze. We need not fear him."

"I can not drive off the feeling, Wart," was the despondent return. "I am trembling in a dread of something terrible that is about to happen."

"Why should you?"

"Cortez Mendoze will never forgive you the blow you struck him."

"I could not help it, Carline! The scoundrel was heard to boast, in a wine-shop, that you had once been his sweetheart."

"And was it not true, Wart?" with a shudder.

"Ay, but he deceived you—deceived your mother! He came to you, dressed in fine clothes, and with pretty speeches. He said he was rich; and I proved to you that he lied—he was poor, an adventurer, and no fit companion for one so pure as Carline Mandoro. My blood boiled when I heard of his language, so I struck him for his baseness."

"And I fear he will seek some terrible

revenge; for he is very passionate. I can not rest easy, dear Wart."

"Pah! Forget him."

"And then, to-day, when I was dusting my bureau—you know the box containing the Star of Diamonds?"

"Yes; in the top drawer."

"I opened the drawer, to put away some trifles, when the lid of the box flew wide, with a loud 'click.'"

"Well?"

"What—?"

"It is nothing—the jar of opening the drawer, perhaps."

"I could not help but feel that it foretold some great calamity."

"Po!"

"For, Wart," her voice sunk low, and she turned her pale face earnestly to his, "it flew open in the same way just before my mother's mother died."

"Ah! yes; now I remember, you promised to tell me all concerning this mysterious star, and the fates attached to it. It has a strange history, you say?"

"Yes—very strange. I will tell you. And then you can see that I am not uselessly worried by its box-lid flying open in my face. And doing so at a time when we have a deadly enemy in Cortez Mendoze, and after you have had a quarrel with him, I have cause to think there is danger hovering near. Oh, Wart! What is coming?"

and she buried her face in her hands, as if the dread that had fastened upon her was momentarily increasing.

"But, this strange history, Carline?" shifting his position nervously. "Tell me, now, about this Star of Diamonds?"

Zetta, the maid, and Zuelo, the little girl, were silent and attentive, too, as Carline began to explain the mystery and fates of the Star of Diamonds. Even the child was impressed by the solemn tone in which her mother spoke.

And while a brief silence ensued upon the last speech of Wart Gomez, there was a face peering in at the open window—the face of a man, with an expression that was scowling, angry, ominous.

(To be continued—Commenced in No. 154.)

The Rock Rider:
OR,
THE SPIRIT OF THE SIERRA.
A TALE OF THE THREE PARKS.BY FREDERICK WHITTAKER.
AUTHOR OF "THE NEW JAHAR," "THE KNIGHT OF THE RUBIES," "DOUBLE-DEATH," ETC., ETC.CHAPTER XXXII.
THE MYSTERY SOLVED.

GUSTAVE BELCOUR was the first to reach the waterfall at the mouth of the haunted glen, and it was he that discharged the rifle-shot which announced their arrival to the camp below. The next to follow was Carl Brinkerhoff, and little Yakop came bustling past the horse's feet and halted at the edge of the waterfall, whining, as if he wanted to go over but dared not.

The four comrades (for Somers and Buford were close behind) looked doubtfully at the sheer walls of precipice before them, and Brinkerhoff observed:

"Himmel! How've ever gets up dere? Dis leedle kal must be vunderful leedle kal to live her!"

At that very moment Belcour uttered an exclamation of satisfaction and delight, for the figure of Ahstata made its appearance in full sight, and, for the first time, the four comrades had a full view of that wondrous beauty, which they had hitherto only seen by glimpses at a distance.

Not a word was uttered as they stood gazing spellbound at her; and then, all of a sudden, the girl came flying toward them, graceful and fearless, a hundred feet at each swing, till she stood on the pointed rock above the waterfall and looked down in silence on them.

Then the spell was broken, the mystery revealed.

Slight and almost invisible as were the suspending cords, they could yet trace them like spiders' threads, and understood it in a moment.

"Der flying trapeze," muttered Carl, who was an old "turner."

"Why did I never think of it before?" murmured Belcour. Then he raised his hat in a profound salutation, and addressed Ahstata, saying:

"Mademoiselle, whoever you are, believe me, it is not impertinent curiosity that has drawn us here. Yesterday I was overpowered and stunned by Indians in this pass, and when I came to, the young lady who had been with me was gone. Tell us, Mademoiselle, did the Indians carry her off, or have you rescued her?"

The girl stood looking earnestly at him all this while. When he had finished, she answered, in a sweet, clear voice:

"She is here. What would you with her?"

"Her father, Colonel Davis, arrived in time to rescue her sister last night," said Belcour. "He is very anxious to see his daughter if you will permit it, mademoiselle."

Ahstata seemed to hesitate a moment. Then she said:

"Can you follow me by the road I came, sir?"

"I think so, mademoiselle."

"Then lay down your arms, leave your companions, and come to me."

Belcour was off his horse in a trice, and delivered over his weapons to his comrades. He had not expected such an easy conquest of the sly creature.

She threw down to him the end of a rope, by which he ascended to the rock on which she stood, and she addressed him, in a cold, business-like tone:

"Swing over to yonder tree," she said; "and when you have reached it, swing back to me."

Belcour was a pretty fair gymnast, but he hesitated a moment to take the leap over such a frightful chasm. Ahstata laughed.

"Give me the rope," she said. "I will go first."

In a moment she was swinging over the giddy void, and in another, back came the rope full swing.

Belcour, ashamed of himself, caught it, and followed her. All that the feat required was boldness, and he lighted on the tree beside the girl in safety. She smiled encouragingly, and observed:

"You do well for the first time. I remember when I was afraid. But now we must take the second swing. Hang the stone over that branch, and then come on."

He obeyed her in silence, and the second great swing took him to the midst of the precipice, where the girl had already left

the station and stood at the entrance of the cleft, ready to send back the rope.

In two minutes more he stood by her side at the entrance of the crater of the extinct volcano, and beheld Blanche Davis and father Clement advancing to meet them.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

CONCLUSION.

A MOURNFUL group was gathered at sunset around the tent which held the couch of the wounded Beckford. The sides of the tent were looped up to admit the cool breeze, and the injured man was propped up with pillows.

Colonel Davis, Major Morris, and one or two gray-headed officers, all old comrades of the poor captain, were clustered about him, with sad faces, while the colonel's daughters supported him on either side, weeping unreservedly.

At the foot of the bed stood Father Clement and Ahstata.

The girl seemed to be strangely moved, as she gazed at the dying officer, and he, on his part, was looking back at her with eager intensity, while Father Clement spoke:

"I can not say for a certainty, sir, who she is. That she comes of white parents you can see for yourself, but the Apache chief, Cochise, owned her for a slave at the time that the superior of our order sent me on a mission to the tribe ruled over by that chief. I noticed the poor child in her lonely degradation, beaten, abused and overworked, and tried my utmost to better her condition. I had some success with the warriors of the tribe, but Cochise himself remained stolid and fierce as ever, and finally my life was threatened by him unless I left the tribe. Now, you know that a missionary is bound to suffer martyrdom if necessary, if thereby he can save a soul; but, alas, gentlemen, I could not say for certain that a single warrior of that stubborn tribe had been truly converted. The only creature who had listened to me with clear understanding was this captive child, and her I felt bound to save if I could. I fled in the night with her, and sought refuge in the mountains, where we have now lived for nearly twelve years in peace."

"It

Saturday Journal

Published every Monday morning at nine o'clock.

NEW YORK, MARCH 8, 1873.

The SATURDAY JOURNAL is sold by all Newsdealers in the United States and in the Canadian Dominion. Parties unable to obtain it from a newsdealer, or those preferring to have the paper sent direct, by mail, from the publication office, are supplied at the following rates:

Terms to Subscribers:
One copy, four months \$1.00
One copy, one year 3.00
Two copies, one year 5.00
In all orders for subscriptions be careful to give address in full—State, County and Town. The paper is always stopped, promptly, at expiration of subscription. Subscriptions can start with any issue number.
Canadian subscribers will have to pay 50 cents extra, to prepay American postage.
All communications, subscriptions, and letters on business, should be addressed to:
READER AND ADAMS, PUBLISHERS,
98 WILLIAM ST., NEW YORK.

A Literary Variety

IS NOW BEING OFFERED BY

THE SATURDAY JOURNAL,

which, in one month, presents its readers with

Four Brilliant and Powerful Serials!

VIZ:

ROCKY MOUNTAIN ROB,

BY ALBERT W. AIKEN;

THE BEAUTIFUL FORGER,

BY MRS. E. F. ELLETT;

CAT AND TIGER,

BY A. P. MORRIS, JR.;

THE RED QUEEN,

BY BARTLEY T. CAMPBELL.

For those readers and households that

"read, mark and inwardly digest" what is

best in current literature, the successive

issues of the "Star" Journal must be a weekly

feast. No paper published in America ever

presented more varied, entertaining and

markedly original matter.

THE reader has a new treat in store, for

we have from Mr. Whittaker's hand a sea and

romance, which, in several particulars, is

one of the most captivating stories that has

yet fallen from his delightful pen. It is

THE SEA CAT;

OR,

The Witch of Darien.

A STORY OF THE BUCANERS.

In which Morgan, the celebrated Sea Rover

and enemy of the Spaniards, plays out an

episode in his astonishing career that is

enthralling as a narration. It may be

anticipated with all curiosity and interest, for

it will fully answer, in its exciting and

thrilling narrative, any expectancy formed.

Our Arm-Chair.

Chat.—The *Prairie Chief* says to its

readers: "Those of our people who wish an

entertaining and instructive paper should

subscribe immediately for the SATURDAY

JOURNAL." Just what a great number of

readers are doing. One pleasing feature of the

JOURNAL is that it goes so largely in

homes and families. A good family paper

by no means implies one that is filled up

with recipes for pies and puddings, rules of

conduct, essays on education, etc., etc. On

the contrary, a real family and fireside

journal is the hardest kind of a weekly to get up, for

the reason that its interest must be so varied

as to reach and satisfy the old and young

equally; it must be grave and gay; it must

have matter that will command attention for

its novelty, freshness and entertaining nature;

it must be well prepared, well illustrated,

well printed on good paper. All this the

SATURDAY JOURNAL aims to accomplish; and

its steadily increasing circulation through-

out the mails is the best of evidences that it

is doing not only well for itself but well for

the homes of America, for which it caters.

—In answer to the inquiry of a correspond-

ent who lost a valuable manuscript by the

confiscation of all matter only partially paid

in postage, we say, the authority for such

proceedure is assumed to lie in the following

sections of the Postal law:

SECTION 151. That all mail matter deposited for

mailing, on which at least one full rate of postage

has been paid as required by law, shall be forwarded

to its destination, charged with the unpaid rate, to

be collected on delivery.

SECTION 152. That if any mail matter, on which

by law the postage is required to be prepaid at the

mailing office, shall by inadvertence reach its destination

without such prepayment, then the prepaid

rates shall be charged and collected on delivery.

It would indeed puzzle a "Philadelphia lawyer"

to extract from these provisions a right to

impose a triple postage, and, failing to re-

ceive it of the person to whom the package is

addressed, to confiscate the package and send

it to the Dead Letter office. Thousands of dol-

lars' worth of manuscripts have so been made

way with, for which the Government ought

to be held responsible. The law requires no

exposition to defend it from this outrageous

invasion of property right. It says, as plain

as words can say it, that all matter on which

even one rate has been prepaid shall be duly

forwarded to its destination, and the still un-

paid rate duly collected on delivery. But, it

adds, if by any reason a package gets into the

mail having nothing prepaid on it, then col-

lect double rates on delivery. That is all. We

have little confidence in an officer who can

read this law as to extract from it the right to

levy triple rates, and to confiscate all man-

uscripts and correspondence which refuses to

submit to the extortion—very little confidence

indeed. And in this matter we speak the

mind of every editor and publisher in New

York city, we are sure.

—A late report from Washington says:

"According to the reports of the Internal

Revenue office, the number of distilleries in

operation on the 1st inst., was 311, with a

daily producing capacity of 278,619 gallons,

being a daily increase during January over

December of 38,921 gallons. What a horri-

ble showing is this! Every gallon of that liquor

represents crime, suffering, death; and yet,

month by month we witness a steady increase

In the amount manufactured. It is "blood

money" indeed that comes from its taxation.

We are literally "peopling Hell" when we in

any way encourage this traffic in liquor. "A

daily producing capacity of 278,619—over one

hundred million gallons per year! Are we to be-

come a nation of drunkards?"

The destruction of buffalo on our Western

plains is something sad to contemplate. Great

slaughter was made during the last four

months of last year. One firm in Leaven-

worth received 30,000 hides per month, while

two others in Kansas City received 15,000 each

in the same time. This is at the rate of 2,000

slain per day. The immense piles of stocks

of hides to be seen at all the stations along

the line of the Kansas Pacific Railroad bear

witness to the slaughter. Prof. Mudge (of

Manhattan, Kansas), who is well posted in

the economy of the plains, places the number

killed per day at 1,000, which is sufficiently

high to insure the early extinction of the spe-

cies. Must this slaughter continue? Con-

gress, it seems to us, might interfere to pre-

vent the destruction of the race as it has in-

terfered in Alaska to prevent the destruction

of seals.

Foolscap Papers.

Whitehorn's Dinner Speech.

From the London Times.

THE public dinner given to Mr. White-

horn on the occasion of his last visit to En-

gland was a great success. Many great

and effective speeches were made by promi-

nent men. Mr. Carlisle said he knew the

moment that Mr. Whitehorn landed on the

British shore that it was *him*, for he had

felt the island shake. He was pleased to see

him.

Mr. Tom Hues said every one in his

parish knew Whitehorn was here, as all the

milk turned sour on a sudden. He was

glad to welcome him.

Dr. Darwin said it did him more good to

see Whitehorn than it would to see one of

his original grandfathers who were monkey

monks. He was proud of the moment.

The Marcus of Boot said he knew Mr.

Whitehorn was in the kingdom, for he had

seen the frogs out on his farm turning

handsprings. He was overjoyed to meet

him.

Hon. Madstone knew Whitehorn had

come when one of the dog-irons in his fire-

place began to bark. This was the proud-

est hour of his life.

John Bright said he was happier on this

occasion than at any other moment since

he invented his celebrated disease. His joy

was complete.

Martin Farquhar Tupper felt like he

could write another book of Proverbial

Hydrophobias standing on his head.

The Marcus of Forlorn said he had seen

Mr. Whitehorn and was willing to live;

and said that all now should drink at Mr.

Whitehorn's health and expense. "Gentle-

men, charge your glasses—to Mr. White-

horn."

Mr. Whitehorn then arose.

Mr. Chairman and gentlemen: the dis-

tinguished honor you have done me this

evening fully comes up to my expectations,

and I thank you for this good dinner you

have been so kind to prepare for me. Were

it not for the momentary affairs which

must soon call me back to the land of lib-

erty and the home of the eagle, I should

dearly love to stay and board with you.

The name of England is associated with all

that is high and pure in literature and phi-

losophy, but I did not believe she had such

good cooks before. I came here this evening

a stranger and a hungry man, and I have

been overwhelmed with the hospitality

of the English character and the excellence

of your mutton-chops—with gravy. When

I look around me to-night the only thing

that disappoints me is that I see none of the

crowned heads here. I should have been

glad to take those crowned heads by the

hand and express my great satisfaction at

their joy of meeting me. But the roast

beef was splendid!

Old England! how my heart thrills at its

sound! It is from her generous shores that

our table sauce comes, and here is man-

ufactured those nice British hosiery! I am

proud to say that I have one of them on

tonight. (Cheers.) It is from here that our

magazines get all their short stories.

(Groans.) Where are the responsive hearts

that have not heard of English muffins?

(Heard! heard!) The immortal fame of her

Diplomatists and half-and-half is world

wide!

It pleases me to address and enlighten

you, and my pride and happiness would be

complete to-night were it not for the fear

that I have eaten too much, but, gentlemen

of Britain, that ox-tail soup was the best I

ever gormandized. (Great Applause.)

Our fore-and-five-fathers came over from

England, and brought Plymouth Rock with

them for ballast, and good ballast it was,

too. What would we have done if they

had not come over? I pause to take a

drink and give it up. They carried the

Goddess of Liberty to our shores, and on

the American soil planted the germs of

freedom and large and improved pumpkins;

both have thriven until their branches reach

from sea to sea, and from sea to sea, and

back to Z and C again.

I am proud of England. Did she not al-

low us to lick her in the Revolution, and

also in 1812? (Wild applause.) And ain't

we able to do it again? (Heard! heard!) If

there was any way by which I could be

made an English duke, I would not consider

it beneath my dignity to sell off my cow

and calf and spend the remainder of my life

in making Britain the greatest empire on

the earth, which, I think, is at the pres-

ent day in the matter of baked beans.

(Applause.) I might even consent to the

office of Lord High Commissioner of the

royal Boot-jack. (Hoorsy.)

What has America done for Great Brit-

ain? Has she not sent all her authors

over here to receive your homage and your

public dinners, so that when they get home

THREE PICTURES.

BY A. P. M., JR.

It matters not what the whole of it. But the scene was brief, and the words were hot and harsh. The fair form of the girl was bent to kneeling; she wept. Zollee of Hoath was sad, and they were bitter tears that stained her soft, smooth cheeks. And he towered above the bowed child—the father in his iron of heart—a blighter of heavenly hopes and sweeter blisses. In his eye there was fire; on his brow, the cross-wrinkle of wrath nurtured an unholy darkness. And down the path of flowers, from the cot, walked the disfigured lover with his weight of sorrow. The damp of failure was upon his soul—Zollee of Hoath was not for him. So said the father of his gem. And Nature round the spot was silent pitifully; for the law was said.

The storm-god raged. The vast sea surged, and the waves, in their gigantic shapes of fright, dashed together with a sullen roar. Through the black sky flashed the sudden flame, hissing and darting amid the murky lightning. And in the seething vortex portended a boat. Its sail was set, despite the scurrying gale; like a bird, it shot forth in the pale of gloom. Howl! Howl! among the angry winds. And tossing, rolling, groaning, straining—on went the fated bark. Two forms clung together at the rudder-wheel. Zollee of Hoath and her lover braved the storm. It was a ride to death! Howl! Howl! shrieked the voices of the rainy Spirits; the loud thunders boomed their fury fierce. Naught could survive the turmoil of the elements. The trail carviced pitched; the gurgling waters burst upon it in devouring wrath. Down! Down! to the chaos of the deep it went. Two forms struggled for a moment on the mountain-topped bosom. "Save! Save!" rose the plaintive cry. "Our Savior is beyond the lowering skies!" the lover said. And then, in the triumph of their faith, they sank. Howl! Howl! broke the winds afresh; a shriek of grief pierced through the thunderous air. For they had perished.

Two graves on the high ground, near to the scene of death. The storm had passed; the sea had yielded up its prey; the waters layed the shore with a sacred murmur. And there comes, through the vernal aisle of the bordering forest, a man who is old in youth— with white hair on a head that erst was black. His form is bent to the support of a crooked cane; his face is pale, and the glance of his eye is restless and weary. Between the flowered mounds he halts—a wanderer. All around is hushed, save the anthems of the birds, and the soft wash of the ambered waves as they beat the glittering sands. The wanderer gazes on the taleful earth; yet, though his lips move, he speaks not. Voice, he has none; for the mind is crushed and sore, as he looks back through the vista of memory—longing to blot out one, just one rude picture of the past. His heart is full to bursting; he weeps. The tears are the tears of woe; his breast is writhing full of anguish. It is a parent's grief; it is the gnawing of remorse. And he sinks to his knees beside the weird place of the dead, and two worn hands are clasped in a repentant prayer. Soon, on one mound he pillows his aching head. He has sought forgiveness of the Angled pair; calmness smooths the sorrow from his brow. The gay flowers round him nod in whispers; the air is filled with strangeness; the birds sing lower while they play; the murmur of the sea is like a mourning wail. Toll! Toll! the muffled bell in the village spire. The wanderer's soul has wings to meet the lovers, in the broad field of the beautiful Beyond!

The Red Queen.

A ROMANCE OF OLD FORT DU QUESNE.

BY BARTLEY T. CAMPBELL.

AUTHOR OF "IN THE WEB," "LAURA'S PERIL," ETC.

CHAPTER I.

THE MEETING IN THE WOOD.

TOWARD the close of a sultry day in August, 1758, a young man, dressed in the garb of a trapper, but with a decidedly military bearing, and a remarkably handsome face and form, stood on the right bank of the Monongahela river a few miles above its junction with the Allegheny, and looked moodily out upon the waters.

He was evidently in trouble; one could see that by the way in which he knitted his brows, and occasionally bit his nether lip until the blood almost came.

After standing in silence for some time, he leaned his rifle against a tree, and sat down upon a huge rock, which projected into the stream.

The sun sunk lower and lower; the high cliffs on the opposite bank began to cast their dark shadows into the waters, and the forest aisles on every side of the young stranger were beginning to gather the shadows of the coming night.

But he seemed oblivious of all this, and it was not until his quick ear caught the sound of approaching footsteps that he looked up, and stood face to face with a tall, majestic Indian.

The young man leaped to his feet at once and grasped his weapon, but the red man smiled at the menace, and said, in broken English:

"The white brother is too fast—he would shed blood when there is no cause. You see I carry no firearms."

The voice was calm, grave, even reproving, and the young man lowered his rifle at once, and answered:

"I would not quarrel with you without reason. But, who are you that you dare go abroad in such times as these unarmed?"

"I am one who knows you well," replied the Indian. "I know your innermost thoughts; your every action. I am Tennessee, the prophet of the Mingoes. My mission is peace, and therefore I go not armed."

The young man smiled incredulously as he said:

"This is all very well to assert; but, if you know me as intimately as you profess, you can surely tell me my name, and something of my past."

"You scoff at my knowledge; you believe Tennessee a knave, but I will convince you that I am not a vain bragger, and that not only your past life is known to me, but your future as well."

"Well, then, let us have my name, if you please," interrupted the young man.

"Your name is Robert Ashmore," replied Tennessee, looking his companion straight in the eyes.

The latter flushed scarlet, and stammered:

"You are mistaken in that guess, Sir Prophet. My name is Cory."

Tennessee made an impatient gesture, and replied:

"Pshaw; don't attempt to deceive me; I am your friend. You are the son of Richard Ashmore, of Maryland. You were a captain under the ill-starred Braddock. After that terrible day of slaughter and defeat, you dragged yourself to the cabin of a Scotchman on the Yonghlyghen river, and he concealed you from your pursuers for two months. While in that lowly cabin

you met, admired and loved Bella Carlyon, the daughter of your protector, and when you quitted Roger Carlyon's cabin to return to your friends you told her how deep and intensely you loved her. You were betrothed there and then, and now after a long absence you return to the wilderness to find that your lady-love and her family have fled, no one knows where."

The young man, who had been listening with open-mouthed wonder to all this, now asked, eagerly:

"And since you know so much, and claim to be a prophet, can you tell me where Bella Carlyon is now?"

"Yes."

"Then tell me—where is she?"

"Ten miles west of this spot on the Ohio," replied Tennessee. "But you must restrain your impatience for a while. There is danger in your path. The French, at Fort Du Quesne, having learned that General Forbes is marching against them, are extremely vigilant, and are scouring the woods in all directions in quest of spies. If you are caught you will be shot like a dog."

"And who, pray, are you that takes such an interest in my affairs?" asked Robert, unable to stifle his astonishment. "I never saw you before in my life."

"Don't be so sure of that," replied Tennessee. "I am your friend, however, because you love the fairest flower in all these forest wilds, and I would serve you."

The last words were spoken in very plain English, and Robert, glancing quickly up into Tennessee's face, said:

"You are not what you seem, and if my surmise is right, you are a white man."

"You have a keen eye, and good judgment," remarked Tennessee, after a pause, "and therefore I rely upon the latter to keep my secret safe. I see you are curious to know the meaning of this disguise, but the time for unmasking has not yet come; but if you obey me strictly, you may learn at an early day my secret."

"But how do I know you will prove true to me?" demanded Robert.

"Because, if I had desired to work you harm, you would now be awaiting the doom of a spy in Du Quesne," was the answer.

"And you say you know Bella Carlyon?"

"As well as if she were my own child."

"And you are not her enemy?"

"No more than I am yours. I love Bella Carlyon as well as if I were her father."

"This is very strange," muttered Robert, half aloud.

"There are a great many strange things in this world," answered the prophet, no longer disguising his voice, "and when you are as old as I, and have experienced as much as I have, you will appreciate this fact more fully than you can do now."

There was a tinge of sadness in the old man's voice as he concluded, and Robert Ashmore began to feel that he could trust him—even with his life.

"You would like to see Miss Carlyon?" continued the prophet.

"Yes, I would gladly risk my existence to see her—if but for a moment."

"Then you shall be gratified."

"When?"

"To-morrow night."

"Why not to-night? I can surely walk ten miles before bedtime yet."

"Possibly; but you must curb your impatience. I can guide you there to-morrow. Without my aid you might fall into the hands of the French. Besides, I have news which it would be well for you to hear, and advice which it would be well for you to heed."

"Well, speak out; what do you advise?"

"You know—that is, you have met—Allequippa, the Indian princess?"

"The Red Queen of the Mingoes?"

"The same."

"Yes," replied Robert. "She favors the English, and some four weeks since I visited her tribe to ask them to co-operate with Forbes' army against Du Quesne."

"And she promised that she would do her best to carry her tribe over to your interests?" interrupted Tennessee.

"How know you this?" asked Robert.

"As I know every thing else," was the answer—"by instinct. But I now bring you a message from Allequippa, and for the sake of the cause for which you fight, I pray you humor her whim."

"If it be reasonable, I will."

"Then, Allequippa loves you."

"Loves me?" exclaimed Robert. "That is indeed a whim, but one which my manhood refuses to humor, sir."

"But if you would be safe to win and wed Bella Carlyon, you must humor this red beauty." The prophet spoke earnestly now, and with a certain air of authority.

"But you would not have me deceive the girl?" demanded Robert.

"No; I would not have you deceive her; but I would have you to see her, and after talking to her kindly, tell her frankly that you love another."

"Do you think this is a wise way to deal with a savage?" asked Robert. "May she not take umbrage and turn her wrath either on me or Bella?"

"I will attend to that. She will be guided by the prophet of her people."

Robert Ashmore paused a moment to think, and then said:

"I have never seen you before, but there is something about you that assures me you are honest. Believing this to be so, I consent to your programme."

"You are a young man of good sense," answered Tennessee, grasping the outstretched hand; "and to-morrow your eyes shall behold her whom you so devotedly love."

The two men walked off together, turning their backs to the river as they went.

CHAPTER II.

THE QUEEN.

THE camp of the Mingoes was pitched in the heart of a deep ravine, through the center of which a sparkling rivulet rippled over a bed of polished pebbles, as if eager to mingle its pure waters with the muddy current of the Monongahela, while on either side of the ravine, tall, gnarled oaks, broad-leaved maples, and slender hickories lifted their stately heads, and flung out their emerald banners, as to screen the camp from the fierce rays of the sun, and the eyes of skulking enemies as well.

It was after sunset when Tennessee and Robert Ashmore came in sight of the camp, but the sky was still brilliant with crimson, gold and vivid scarlet flashes, and down through the interlacing branches the light sifted, falling at last in bright, fantastic patches on tent and sward.

In front of many of the rude tents, which were constructed of hides and branches, dusky squaws were busy building fires and preparing the evening meal, while on the banks of the rivulet mentioned were stretched a number of painted savages, talking in their mother tongue of the excitement of the war-path and the chase.

It was a very peaceful, even pretty scene, set in a leafy frame, and capped with clouds of blue smoke, which curled lazily up from the camp-fires.

When Tennessee was discovered there was a shout of welcome from the men, and the women waved their hands in greeting.

He spoke to them in their own language, and told them that Ashmore was an Englishman, who was desirous of making a treaty with them, and that in a day or two he would present them with many beautiful gifts.

This was good news, to a majority at least, and again they shouted aloud, while some of the more enthusiastic even capered around Ashmore, and smiled in his face.

Tennessee noticed, however, that White Eagle, one of the most popular braves in the tribe, stood apart and neither smiled nor spoke.

"There is danger in him," muttered the prophet, "and I must be on my guard."

Then, turning to one of the women, he asked where the queen was.

"In her tent," was the reply.

"Then go and tell her Tennessee, the prophet, and his English friend are here."

The woman hurried off to the furthest end of the ravine. Presently she returned, and bade them follow her, as the queen was anxious to see the visitors.

"You see how eager she is to see you," remarked the prophet to Robert; "treat her advances kindly, and all will be well; if you don't do this, her pique may cost you your life."

The young man promised, and the trio walked on in silence.

The tent of Allequippa was made of the finest and rarest skins, and the interior was decorated with the brightest plumage of forest birds.

In the center of the tent the young queen stood, dressed in a short hunting-skirt, profusely ornamented with feathers and colored beads, while her small, well-shaped feet were incased in moccasins exquisitely adorned.

She was very beautiful. Her limbs were softly rounded, her form supple and lithe, and, when she walked, her step was light and graceful. Her eyes were dark and lustrous, seemed to be swimming in liquid brightness; her lips were full, ripe, and red; and, although her hair was a trifle coarse, it swept down her back, black and glittering as a raven's wing.

Unlike most of her tribe, her skin was more the color of a rich olive than copperish, and, taken altogether, Robert Ashmore thought her lovely.

"Is true he had seen her before, but that was in the midst of her tribe; and, although he then recognized that she had some claim to beauty, he never realized how very handsome she was until now."

Her eyes blazed when they met Robert Ashmore's admiring gaze, and, advancing frankly, she extended her hand and said:

"Allequippa is glad to see her pale-faced friend, and he is welcome."

Ashmore took the proffered hand and kissed it, saying: "I'm equally glad to meet the Queen of the Mingoes once more."

"Have you thought of me since we parted last?" she asked.

"Often," was the reply.

"She had a firm belief that he would do so; but, as month after month rolled away, and she heard no tidings from the absentee, she began to entertain serious doubts of his fidelity."

Then her father removed from his old home on the Monongahela to their present abode, and this fact gave her cause to fear that, even if Robert ever did come back, he would not be able to find her.

Tennessee, the Indian prophet, however, had informed her father of the approach of Forbes' army; but a few days before the date on which our story opens, and this gave her grounds to hope that Captain Ashmore would return with the advancing host.

Bella Carlyon was a tall, pretty, blue-eyed blonde, with skin as white and transparent as snowy wax, and drifts of hair that looked very much like skeins of refined gold. She had been born there in the wilderness; had had little chance for intellectual improvement, but her mother, who was a refined, intelligent woman, spared no pains in teaching her daughter all she knew herself, and so Bella acquired an education that helped not a little to enhance her charms, and outshine all the lassies in the settlements.

On this bright August afternoon, Bella was seated in the deep, cool doorway of her home, engaged in sewing, occasionally stopping to peep into a bright volume of verses which Captain Ashmore had given her; and then she would run the verses over in her mind, and ply the needle industriously again.

It was a quiet scene; the air was drowsy and warm; the broad Ohio rolled its shaggy tide down at the foot of the little brambly path, and the creek gurgled along over its rocky bed, singing a dull old tune as it went.

"It's very stupid sitting here," she said to herself. Then, rising, she put away her sewing, and, book in hand, walked down the path toward the river.

When she had almost reached the water's edge, she turned aside, and seating herself under the protecting branches of a huge maple, began again to read.

The crackling of branches, as if some person was trying to push their way through the underbrush, aroused her at last, and she was about to turn her steps homeward, when, from a by-path, sprang a young man, and looking up, she recognized in the new-comer the face and form of Robert Ashmore!

He opened his arms wide. "Bella Carlyon, don't you know me?"

Yes, she knew him; knew him well; and with a glad cry, she bounded into his arms, and nestled her head upon his breast.

"I thought you were never coming back," she said, at length.

"Oh, yes; I could not stay away. But that you were here, darling, I would never have left Maryland again. My experience at Braddock's defeat was sufficient to chill my enthusiasm for border warfare. But this far wilderness holds a magnetic influence over me, as long as you are in it, darling."

They were very happy now, and, arm in arm, they strolled along the margin of the stream, talking of the past and building fairy castles for the future.

"Ah, no; not my slave; but my own beautiful forest sister!" he said, tenderly kissing her.

CHAPTER III.

THE WOOD SPY.

ROGER CARLYON'S cabin was a rough hewn log affair, of two stories. It stood on the bank of the Ohio river, at the mouth of what is now known as Charter's creek, just two miles below where the city of Pittsburgh stands. But, in the year of grace 1758, there was nothing to be seen on the tongue of land at the junction of the Allegheny and Monongahela but the low wooden walls of Fort Du Quesne, and Carlyon's home was surrounded by a howling wilderness.

Possibly there was not a more comfortable backwoods home west of the mountains for Mrs. Carlyon was tidiness and thrift personified, while Bella, her only child, had wonderful taste. This she gave evidence of, in the manner in which she trained the wild-flowers and creeping vines to clamber up the sides of her rude home, and along the eaves, and over the roof, until their clinging tendrils formed a network of rare beauty, and almost screened the house itself from view.

Although it was known by Colonel Jouture, the commandant at Du Quesne, that Carlyon was an Englishman and an ardent supporter of King George, still he was never molested. Indeed, the garrison had received strict orders from Jouture to treat the Carlyons with the greatest deference. Some persons were astonished at this favor, as was Roger Carlyon himself, but the cause of this clemency was made known to the latter when the French colonel visited him one day and asked the privilege of paying court to Bella.

"I love your daughter," he said, "truly love her, and, if you consent to my marriage with her, she may one day be a countess."

"Colonel Jouture much obliged to you for your respectful consideration, but my daughter's hand is at her own disposal, and you will have to win her, not me."

These were plain, honest Roger Carlyon's words, and although they evinced none of the warmth of enthusiasm which Jouture had expected, still they were respectful, and the Frenchman politely thanked him for them.

From that day Jouture paid many attentions to Bella. He brought her flowers for her hair, and one time a piece of costly French lace. The first she always accepted, but the lace she refused to take, saying:

"No, Colonel Jouture, I have no need for that here in the wilderness; besides, it is too costly a gift to receive from one who is comparatively a stranger."

"But, we may not be strangers," he said, impulsively, and then he told her the story of his passion.

She listened to him in silence, and, when he paused for a reply, told him, then and there, without the least hesitation, that she liked him as a friend, but that her feeling for him was no deeper, and, possibly, never would be.

"But I have faith in my power to win, mademoiselle," he said, "and I can wait."

After that he came regularly, three times a week, but it was only on rare occasions he had an opportunity of speaking alone with Bella.

She was very shy in his presence now; in fact, her waking hours were given wholly to dreaming of Robert Ashmore, and wondering if he would ever come back and claim her for his own, as he had promised.

She had a firm belief that he would do so; but, as month after month rolled away, and she heard no tidings from the absentee, she began to entertain serious doubts of his fidelity.

Then her father removed from his old home on the Monongahela to their present abode, and this fact gave her cause to fear that, even if Robert ever did come back, he would not be able to find her.

Tennessee, the Indian prophet, however, had informed her father of the approach of Forbes' army; but a few days before the date on which our story opens, and this gave her grounds to hope that Captain Ashmore would return with the advancing host.

Bella Carlyon was a tall, pretty, blue-eyed blonde, with skin as white and transparent as snowy wax, and drifts of hair that looked very much like skeins of refined gold. She had been born there in the wilderness; had had little chance for intellectual improvement, but her mother, who was a refined, intelligent woman, spared no pains in teaching her daughter all she knew herself, and so Bella acquired an education that helped not a little to enhance her charms, and outshine all the lassies in the settlements.

On this bright August afternoon, Bella was seated in the deep, cool doorway of her home, engaged in sewing, occasionally stopping to peep into a bright volume of verses which Captain Ashmore had given her; and then she would run the verses over in her mind, and ply the needle industriously again.

It was a quiet scene; the air was drowsy and warm; the broad Ohio rolled its shaggy tide down at the foot of the little brambly path, and the creek gurgled along over its rocky bed, singing a dull old tune as it went.

"It's very stupid sitting here," she said to herself. Then, rising, she put away her sewing, and, book in hand, walked down the path toward the river.

When she had almost reached the water's edge, she turned aside, and seating herself under the protecting branches of a huge maple, began again to read.

The crackling of branches, as if some person was trying to push their way through the underbrush, aroused her at last, and she was about to turn her steps homeward, when, from a by-path, sprang a young man, and looking up, she recognized in the new-comer the face and form of Robert Ashmore!

He opened his arms wide. "Bella Carlyon, don't you know me?"

Yes, she knew him; knew him well; and with a glad cry, she bounded into his arms, and nestled her head upon his breast.

"I thought you were never coming back," she said, at length.

"Oh, yes; I could not stay away. But that you were here, darling, I would never have left Maryland again. My experience at Braddock's defeat was sufficient to chill my enthusiasm for border warfare. But this far wilderness holds a magnetic influence over me, as long as you are in it, darling."

They were very happy now, and, arm in arm, they strolled along the margin of the stream, talking of the past and building fairy castles for the future.

"Ah, no; not my slave; but my own beautiful forest sister!" he said, tenderly kissing her.

He told her then of the magnitude of General Forbes' army, and wound up by saying: "This will not be an ill-fated expedition like Braddock's and Grant's. We have come, this time, prepared to deal with a treacherous, wily foe, and, before two months pass, the colors of France will no longer float over the ramparts of Du Quesne."

She believed him, and so she said: "And after the fort is taken, will you remain here?"

"No, not here, exactly," was the reply. "I will make a certain pretty forest flower Mrs. Captain Ashmore, and then I will transplant her to the Chesapeake."

She blushed a little; then he stooped down and kissed her; and, turning their steps in the direction of the house, they soon disappeared in the shadowy, leafy aisles.

They had scarce done so when a stout, handsome man, dressed in the garb of a French soldier, raised himself up from behind a clump of locusts which grew close to the river's brink, and, shaking his fist excitedly after the lovers, exclaimed:

"Curse you both! I now see why I have failed to win the beauty. I have a rival—eh? And such a rival, too! Ah! by St. Louis, I'll make short work of him; and as for you, Bella Carlyon—you shall be mine, either by foul or fair means!"

His face was purple with rage, and his bulky frame was all a tremble.

He turned back to the river again, where a canoe, with two Indians in it, was moored, and seating himself in the stern, he said:

"Row back to the fort."

They took up their paddles at once, and soon the long, slender craft was creeping up La Belle River, toward Du Quesne.

(To be continued.)

Rocky Mountain Rob,

THE CALIFORNIA OUTLAW;

OR,

The Vigilantes of Humbug Bar.

BY ALBERT W. AIKEN.

AUTHOR OF "THE WOLF," "IRON," "OVERLAND KIT," "RED MAZEPPA," "AGE OF SPADES," "HEART OF FIRE," "WITCHES OF NEW YORK," "A STRANGE GIRL," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XIII.

A STEP IN THE DARK.

WITH a desperate effort Dick freed his wrists from the bonds that bound them, then, with outstretched hands, advanced. It was a fearful moment of suspense, for he knew not but that each step might bring his feet upon the rattlesnake, to feel it strike into his flesh.

The tide of luck was with Talbot this time, however, for he managed to gain the passage-way without encountering the snake.

"He's hiding in some corner, perhaps?" "There ain't a corner for him to get into," said the outlaw; "it runs right chuck into the rock. I was down hyer on't."

The pursuers went straight on; they had ceased to track the fugitive by his foot-steps in the sand, as it was plainly evident that he must have gone directly onward.

The passage was scarcely wide enough to permit two persons to walk abreast; it twisted first to the right and then to the left, and a hundred yards further on ended abruptly, the way barred by the impenetrable rock.

The outlaws paused in astonishment; they had not brought the fugitive to bay, as they had confidently expected.

"The devil seize him!" cried the chief, in a rage; "where can he have hidden himself?"

The road-agents gazed at each other with blank faces. The disappearance of Talbot was incomprehensible—ay, miraculous.

"Perhaps he didn't come this way?" suggested one of the band, anxious to account for the strange event.

"Didn't we trace his footsteps in the sand?" cried Rob, angrily.

"Let us go back and track him carefully," suggested another.

A fine chance we'd have of tracking him now, by his footsteps in the sand, after we've trampled like a drove of wild horses over the trail," said Rob, sarcastically.

"I have it, cap'n!" cried one of the men. "He came as far as this and then turned back into the prison cave again."

"Perhaps so," answered Rob, thoughtfully; "but if he did do so, he can not escape us, for there is but one road from the prison chamber, and that leads directly to the council-hall; and even if he has got as far as that, he can go no further, for the rest of the band are in the outer chamber beyond."

Then they retraced their steps; but, though they searched carefully through the vaulted chamber, and even looked into the stony cell which had been designed for Talbot's coffin and tomb, no traces of the man could they find.

The rattlesnake, too, had disappeared; the reptile had retreated into some crevice of the rock, secure from observation.

The band returned to the council-chamber and there they found other members of the gang, so it was clear that the fugitive had not come that way.

The outlaw chief was indeed terribly enraged at the escape of Talbot, for now it was life against life!

"He must be within the cave somewhere," the chief exclaimed. "There must be no rest for us until we find him, or discover in what way he has contrived to avoid our search. I thought that every corner of the cave was known to us, but there must be some secret passage in the rocks which has escaped us. So, provide yourselves with candles, and some of you make torches of the pine boughs. We'll explore the passage again."

Aided by the lights, they searched high and low, but, as before, they found no trace of the fugitive—no secret passage in the rock.

"This man must be Satan or one of his imps," Rob cried, in anger, as the men gathered in the council-hall, after their fruitless search.

The brigand chief now dispatched three of his trusted men to patrol the canyons near to the mouth of the cave.

The mind of the mountain brigand was very ill at ease. If Talbot succeeded in escaping, and bore away with him the secret of the cave and the means of entrance thereto, good-by to the safety of the stronghold of the road-agents! The mountain cavern would be more likely to prove their tomb, rather than their fortress.

And Talbot—keen-witted, strong-armed Injun Dick, strange blending of the iceberg and the volcano—how had he escaped from the toils of his terrible foes?

In blind haste, he had dashed onward in the darkness, not knowing whether the passage would lead, whether to freedom or to death.

The sharp rocks tore his outstretched hands until the drops dripped from the white fingers; but onward he went—behind him, certain death; before him, uncertain chance.

Talbot felt that he could not keep up the terrible pace much longer; his breath was coming thick and fast, and the great sweat-drops rolled down his forehead, when, suddenly, both hands came in contact with the surface of the jagged rock, and the terrible knowledge that he had gone to the end of the passage flashed upon him in an instant.

With the quickness born of desperation, he tried the surface of the wall with his hands as high as he could reach, in hope to find some opening leading into another gallery like in nature to the first; but vain was the trial. He felt that he was caught like a rat in a trap. He had received but a respite, not a pardon.

Strong man though he was, Talbot groaned aloud in agony. Then to his ears came a distant sound. Full well he understood the meaning of that noise. The road-agents, alarmed by their confederate, were even now upon his track, with intent to drag him back to that damp tomb from whence the poisonous reptile had saved him.

The distant sound of the outlaws' tread resounded, hollow and dismal, among the arches of the vaulted passage, and grew more and more distinct as they came nearer and nearer.

Then the thought came to the mind of the hunted man that, perhaps, in the passage-way along which he had come there might be some crevice in the rock wherein he might hide, and thus for a while escape the search.

And so, while the road-agents paused for a moment by the side of their comrade, stricken down by the fangs of the rattlesnake, Talbot, with eager, trembling hands, sought along the wall on either side for a place of concealment. It was a fearful risk, for each step that Talbot took brought him nearer and nearer to the men who were hunting him down, thirsting for his blood.

"Heaven aid me!" cried the desperate man, in wild despair, as step after step brought him nearer and nearer to his enemies, and his hands fell only on the cold surface of the solid rock.

Ten short and feverish steps the fugitive takes; twenty times the jagged wall tears his nervous hands; then, with the curses and shouts of the outlaws ringing in his ears, as they again advance on the chase,

he catches his foot against a projecting rock and falls headlong to the ground. The fine sand cuts his face and chafes his mouth and nose; he heeds not that; he is conscious of one thing only; his right hand, extended sideways, strikes, not the solid rock, but empty air!

Oh, joy! Level with the ground, not a foot from his head, is a rounded cavity through which his body can pass.

He thinks not of what may be within—that, perhaps, comes uninvited to the home of the rattlesnake; that the crested serpent may, even as he enters, be coiled in deadly folds ready to strike its fangs into his flesh; he thinks only that the foe is on his track, and while their feet are treading the sands of the gallery, and the flickering light of their candles pierces the gloom not ten paces from him, he drags himself through the cavity, and discovers that there is room for him to stand upright. He rises to his feet, and while, with oath and shout, the road-agents go trooping by, separated from him only by a foot of rock, with an exulting laugh he steps forward in the darkness. A single step only, and then the laugh turns to a cry of terror, for he has stepped into empty space, and wildly clutching at the air, he goes down, down into that awful pit.

CHAPTER XIV.

JOHN RIMEE.

THE young stranger, who had called himself John Rimee, paid Shook for his breakfast and then left the house. Colonel Jacks, who had watched the young man intently while he was paying, followed him.

Rimee called to the hostler to bring out his horse. He evidently was ill at ease, and started with a nervous shiver when he turned and found the old soldier at his elbow, apparently watching him.

"A fine morning, sir," the colonel said. "Yes, sir," returned the stranger. He did not like the scrutiny of the ex-officer, but a certain air of command—of dignity—in the ex-colonel's bearing, had its weight.

"A stranger to the Bar, I take it?" the colonel said. "Yes," answered the stranger, just a little abruptly.

"I trust, sir, that you will pardon my questions," the soldier continued, with stately dignity, mingled with a hauteur that was natural to the man, a gentleman by birth and breeding.

"Oh, certainly," the young stranger said, impressed, in spite of himself, by the colonel's manner.

"I assure you, sir, that it is no idle curiosity. I question you, sir, because your face is strangely familiar to me. It recalls events which years ago shaped the whole current of my life."

The stranger listened attentively, and a slight frown gathered on his brow. From under his long lashes he looked searchingly at the face of the colonel, as if he was striving to recall something from the past.

"I am sure, sir, that I shall be pleased to afford you any information in my power," the young man replied, after quite a pause. It was as if he had been deliberating what to say.

"If I may take the liberty to ask your name?" the colonel asked. He was strangely agitated, and his usually cool gray eyes were snapping, and the pale lips were trembling under the short, bristly mustache.

"John Rimee," the colonel said. "Rimee—Rimee?" the old soldier repeated, slowly. He shook his head, thoughtfully. "That's not the name," he muttered to himself.

The young stranger did not hear the muttered sentence, but evidently guessed its meaning, for a lurid light shone in his dark eyes, and an ugly, scornful smile curled the corners of his proud lips.

"I beg your pardon again, but is your father living?" the colonel asked, raising his blood-shot eyes to the face of the young man.

"No, sir."

"Dead?"

"Yes, sir."

The colonel seemed bewildered; he had but repeated the question, yet he did not seem conscious of it.

"Dead—he dead and I live?" The soldier passed his hand vacantly across his forehead, then pulled the long ends of his mustache, which he wore at the French fashion. "It is not his name, and yet I am sure that it is *her* son; voice, eyes, hair, all alike," he murmured.

The young man waited patiently; there was a peculiar, half-hidden smile, which vanished when the old colonel looked him in the eye.

"Is—your mother living?" It cost the old man a throb of pain to put the question, though long years had come and gone since he had seen the woman to whom he guessed that his question referred.

"My mother died twenty-six years ago," replied the young man, slowly and distinctly; and while he spoke, his quick, black eyes never left the face of the colonel, and they seemed to rejoice when a look of pain appeared upon that face.

"Died twenty-six years ago!" the colonel muttered.

"Yes, sir, in France, where I was born."

"France—twenty-six years ago. I was mistaken then," the colonel said, disappointed. "I really beg your pardon, sir; I perceive that you are not the person that I troubled you with my questions, and I trust that you will excuse me. I am not quite so young as I once was."

With graceful dignity the old man delivered the explanation.

"Don't mention it, sir; I am sorry that I am not the person you sought." The young man spoke kindly. His horse was then brought, and he mounted and rode slowly away, while the old man watched him with a troubled expression upon his face.

"I can not understand it. I would not have believed that it is possible for any human being in this world, except her child, to possess that face. When I looked into his eyes, hers again rose up before me, soft in their melting tenderness, bright in their liquid fire. By Jove! I believe that I am in my second childhood! The voice, too; exactly the same; every tone alike!"

A gentle hand was laid upon the colonel's shoulder, which roused him from his reveries. He turned and beheld Doc Kidder, who had just come from the Water-proof saloon.

"Ah, Doc, is that you?"

"Yes; you seem all in a heap."

"Enough to make me, Doc," the colonel replied. "You remember the young man who rode up the street just before we went in to take our cocktails?"

"Yes; the young fellow with dark eyes that you said was the very image of your wife?"

"Precisely. Well, I've just had five minutes' conversation with him."

"Ah?"

"Yes; I could not resist the temptation to speak to him, for the likeness was so wonderful that I felt sure that he must be her child."

"And was he?" Kidder asked, carelessly.

"No, no. He told his name, and said that his mother died in France twenty-six years ago."

"His name was not the one you expected to hear?"

"No; nothing like it. I thought that he was her child, but that he would bear the name of the man who stole her away from me. The man whom I once swore that I would kill, even if I had to hunt him through all the world, and take all the years of my life for the task."

A quiet smile came over Kidder's face; he had his own ideas in regard to killing men for such uncertain pieces of property as women.

"You are sure, then, from his statements to you, that this gentleman is not the person you thought he was?"

"Yes."

"Now, my dear colonel," and Kidder laid his arm caressingly upon the shoulder of the other, "I hope you won't be offended, but, standing in the doorway yonder, I overheard all the conversation that passed between you and this young stranger, and I did what you neglected to do, kept a close watch upon his face. I feel morally certain that he has lied to you all the way through."

"The deuce you say!" said the colonel, in wonder.

"Fact! I watched his eyes, and the corners of his mouth. He exhibited a great deal more interest than a mere stranger would have taken in your questions."

"How shall I discover the truth?"

"That's a difficult question to answer, my dear colonel," Kidder said, thoughtfully. "By Jove I have it!" he cried, after a pause; "consult the fortune-teller, who has just hung out her shingle at the Bar."

"I'll be shot if I don't, sir!" cried the ex-officer.

CHAPTER XV.

THE ORACLE.

"Yes, sir; I'll be shot if I don't consult the fortune-teller," the colonel repeated, emphatically; "not that I take much stock in any such humbug, but I'll do it just to see what she'll have to say about this affair."

"I'll go with you, colonel," Kidder said; "I want a little information myself. I've had an unusually good run of luck lately, and I'd like to see what she'd predict for the future. One of the Johns over at Chinese camp has started a little bank, and as a good white man, I think it's my duty to suppress gambling among the heathens, so I've been thinking about going over to the camp and breaking that bank ever since I heard it was in operation."

"What is it?—monte?"

"Yes, a monte bank."

"Let's have our breakfast first, and then we'll go for the fortune-teller."

The two adjourned to the dining-room of the Water-proof, eat their breakfast and sallied forth to consult the oracle of fate in the person of Colomba Merimee, "Fortune-teller."

The two were doomed to disappointment though, for the Chinaman who came in answer to their call informed them that the fortune-teller was absent and would not be at home until evening.

"We'll have to wait then, colonel," Kidder remarked, as they retraced their steps. "I shall call again to-night," the colonel declared; "since I've gone so far, I will go further."

"I'll wait with you; we'll go after supper."

"All right; which way are you going?" to the hotel?

"Yes, I want to get a little sleep; I was up all last night, you know. It's really my duty as a citizen of the Bar to smash that bank at Chinese Camp," said Kidder, abruptly. "The Bar is the metropolis of the valley, and if there's to be any bank located this is the place. Those Johns and their monte bank must be bust up or we shall be ruined by Chinese cheap labor; well, good-day, colonel."

"Good-day; I'm going down to the mine."

And so the two parted.

The colonel went down to the mine by the bluff to superintend the putting up of a new dune designed to give a greater head of water, while Kidder went to the Water-proof saloon where he had his headquarters. There he threw himself on his bunk and slept for two or three hours, then got up and amused himself with a pack of cards, trying various combinations, all designed to reduce the odds of chance to a basis of certainty.

When the great red sun, sunk slowly down behind the tall white peaks of the Big-horn mountains, which fringed the western sky, and the clear waters of the Wisdom, rippling over the yellow sands of the Bar, began to cloud over with the dark shadows of the pines growing along the eastern bank of the river, the busy hum of toil from the human hive nestled by the banks of the mountain stream and in the canyons and gulches ranging from it, grew less and less. The water no longer played against the bluff-side, washing down golden-brown earth in great masses into the sluiceways and the "rookers" below. The sound of the blasing charge and the drilling pick tearing the quartz rock from its resting-place in the mountain's side ceased.

One by one the brawny miners, hardy sons of toil, came trooping into the Bar, intent upon bartering their hard-earned gains for the toil-sweetened bread of life or patient tanglefoot whisky.

Some came to seek beneath the canvas tents or boarded shanties for the needed rest after their day of toil; others to indulge in the fascinating game of poker, or to watch the rattle of the dice at the scientific chuck-a-luck.

And, to the disgrace of the Bar, be it said—quite a large number of "pilgrims" wended their way up the stream to the Chinese Camp, all intent upon backing the Johns' monte.

News travels quickly in the mountain region, and four-and-twenty hours after the first miner retired "broke" from the monte-board, the fact that such a "bank" was running in the Chinese Camp was known in every mountain mining gulch, from Humburg Bar to Geyser Spring.

After supper, Kidder and the colonel started for the fortune-teller's shanty.

On their way thither, Kidder encountered quite a number of his acquaintances; one and all, almost without an exception, announced that they were going to take a stroll up the Wisdom as far as the Chinese Camp, "maybe."

"They'll either break that bank before I get there or else it will be so cussed strong as to oversize my pile," Kidder remarked, just as they got to the door of the shanty which bore the legend, "Colomba Merimee, Fortune-teller."

As before, the Chinaman answered the knock. This time, however, he invited the visitors to enter, in the choicest "pigeon English," as the sage who read the future was at home.

Kidder and the colonel were shown by the heathen into the main room of the shanty, and asked to sit down.

"Commee soon," the celestial said, and then retired.

A candle was burning on the table and cast its dim light over the room.

A common pine table and two chairs comprised the furniture.

"Not a particularly elegant 'lay out,' colonel," Kidder remarked, after a glance around.

"No; Spartan simplicity."

"No stuffed owls, serpents or sable hangings to prepare the minds of the unbelievers to receive the dread secrets of futurity," Kidder continued.

"No; I wonder at it too, for such mummery generally has great effect upon the untutored mind. Imagination goes a great way in this world. Prepare a man to expect a certain result, lead him to believe that he will see it, and he'll try very hard to do so even if he don't."

"Quite correct, colonel; but I rather think this oracle of fortune who bears the romantic name of Colomba couldn't find two tougher subjects to impress with her supernatural knowledge than you and I, colonel."

"Yes; we're both in the 'sere and yellow leaf,' and in our time have seen a little of the world."

"Men wise in their own conceit sometimes fall an easy prey to the power that perchance they may despise," said a voice, close at their elbows.

Kidder and the colonel looked and beheld a woman, clad in a dark dress and closely veiled, standing by their side. She had entered so noiselessly that they had not noticed her approach.

The two men looked at the veiled woman with curiosity. She was slender in figure, and tall and straight; young too, the outlines of her figure clearly decided that.

The tone of the woman's voice astonished both the colonel and Kidder; there was a masculine ring to it; it was as if a man was striving to imitate a woman.

"Well, gentlemen, what would you with the fortune-teller?" she asked, finding that they did not speak.

Now, truth to tell, both Kidder and the colonel were a little taken aback, as a sailor would say, by the sudden and unexpected appearance of the veiled woman, and they felt just a little nettled that she should have overheard their words.

The fortune-teller had taken them at a disadvantage.

"Well, colonel, will you proceed first, or shall I?" Kidder asked.

"You first, Doc Kidder!" cried the woman, imperiously, without giving the old soldier time to reply. "I can give you all the information you require in ten minutes, while I shall have much to say to this gentleman," and with her finger she indicated the colonel as she spoke.

The two men looked at each other; the fortune-teller had succeeded in astonishing them already.

"Go ahead, Kidder, I'm in no hurry," the colonel protested.

"All right, and now Miss or madam, whichever may be your state in life," Kidder said, rising and addressing the veiled woman who stood motionless as a statue by the table. "I propose to test your power by asking you a few questions."

"There is no necessity for you to question me," the woman remarked, sharply, and again the masculine ring came out, clear and strong.

"Oh, you can tell my thoughts then, without my putting them into words?" Kidder said, lightly, and there was a strong expression of unbelief upon his face, visible even in the dim light which pervaded the room.

"You doubt?" the fortune-teller queried, somewhat scornfully. "Listen then and be convinced. You wish to know whether you are to be lucky or unlucky; whether you will break the monte-bank just started at the Chinese Camp, or lose your own gold-dust in the attempt?"

Despite Kidder's coolness he could not prevent a slight expression of astonishment from appearing upon his face, while the colonel, less used to concealing his emotions than the practiced gamester, looked utterly astounded.

(To be continued—commenced in No. 152.)

The False Widow:
OR,
FLORIAN REDESDALE'S FORTUNE.

BY MRS. JENNIE DAVIS BURTON,
AUTHOR OF "ADRIA, THE ADOPTED," "GECIL'S DECRET," "STRANGELY WED," "MADAME DURAND'S PRODIGES," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XVIII.

LORELLE.

"A LITTLE more of your side face, if you please, Miss Redesdale. That will do. These first sittings are most tedious, while you have to preserve the same attitude through the outlining. I'll try to make this posturing for a portrait as little of a torture as possible. You've no idea what a bore it gets to be after a time. To you ladies, I mean."

I could go on filling in heavenly backgrounds with angelic beings at the fore through the whole term of a natural earthly existence."

"How devoted you are to your art, Mr. Ken."

"Well, yes; but not to this feature of it as art. I don't, and never will, excel in this branch. Strange, isn't it, how circumstances sometimes keep driving one straight out of line of the course we ought to follow?"

"And drive straight to the right end always, notwithstanding."

"Do you think so? I've been skeptical on that point, but I'm half inclined to believe at last. Now, here am I, a promising young artist, they say. Never mind how much of it I promise, yet. I'm sure to make my mark where I've made my special study,

at landscape painting. I've got out some pieces so deliciously natural, you might almost fancy you hear the breeze rustling through the leaves, stirring the shadows and dimpling the surface of the pools. The sunshine warms you, and the shades and tints are just as they should be. Now people ought to appreciate talent like that, and encourage it. Instead, they sweep it with one optic and a gold-mounted eyeglass, commenting:

"From nature? Really—aw—very sweet, I'm sure. Just as you say, my dear sir; very meritorious indeed, and it's a duty with us connoisseurs to draw out such genius as is displayed here. I must have the author of this around to paint Clotilde in her character as Anamorph at our private theatricals." By the way, I'd like to paint you in character, Miss Redesdale."

"To encourage budding genius?"

"To gratify myself. It just struck me that you'd make a lovely Amy Robart; say in the scene where she encounters England's queen in the gardens at Kenilworth. It wouldn't do if you were one of those quailish young ladies who have presentiments, and go into spasms of superstitious horror over the fate of the unhappy Amy. I'm not going to ask you to sit for it just yet, but I may some day when I'm spurred into attempting such a piece."

"Then I shall reserve my answer until the request is made. To paint Clotilde in character—that is where you broke off, I believe."

"Yes, as a means of developing talent and patronizing the art, instead of buying the well-executed piece on exhibition, or ordering something in the same which is my line. So, because it's remunerative, I go on painting Clotildes, and leave my real talent tucked away snugly in the corner of the napkin. And that brings me to the point. Instead of working out the inspiration of silvan scenes, or wild winter landscapes—freezing my nose and stiffening my fingers in making sketches so elaborate at leisure—I am here ensconced in a room which is fitted up like a bower and—painting you."

"What an abrupt stopping-place. Did you just catch yourself in time to prevent your saying something disagreeable?—another Clotilde, for instance?"

"Ah, you know better than that. Perhaps I may tell you some day, Miss Redesdale, why I think I may be drawing near to the happiest lot I dare hope for through being here."

He was rather in the habit of making speeches of this sort, which were open to the broadest kind of inference. It was like the essence of adoration which she, in accepting, might seem to encourage, at the same time so subtly offered that she had no choice but to accept.

"In becoming famous, I presume you mean. Who knows, when that notable piece appears? Didn't you say that I in some way suggested the idea?"

"I do not mean by becoming famous, Miss Redesdale. I have said once, and I repeat it—I never shall become famous at this sort of work. Have you any curiosity to know why people persist in driving me to it?"

"Vanity, doubtless; the pleasure of seeing their features perpetuated to be regarded with reverent admiration by future generations."

"Not at all. No more than it is owing to my genius—I do claim to be a genius, contrary to all rules of modesty ascribed to the class. It sounds egotistical to say it, but it's owing entirely to the fact that I'm fortunate enough to possess a rather good-looking face, a rather glib tongue, and the facility of turning the two in making a good impression. Confess now that you rather like my style, Miss Redesdale."

"And throw fuel on the flame of your inordinate assurance? You don't expect me to do that; or is it simply following out the usual programme? Are you so frank with all your fair sitters?"

"May be, in a manner. They don't generally wait for me to ask them, I believe. They pet and tease and make me a confidant at their own sweet wills, and consider me vastly honored by their preference—as of course I am. You'd never imagine what secrets of flirtation and love-affairs I have safely locked within my breast."

"My dear Miss Redesdale, how can you ask? A handsome young artist, if at all clever, is a good addition to any lady's repertoire; he can be made of avail in a hundred different ways. But he must remember his place, and stow his heart away from sight and touch. Fair ladies may condescend to flirt with him on occasions, once in a while some very youthful Miss will fall madly in love with his classic nose and arching eyebrows; but if he presumes upon any such encouragement, there's always an irate papa or vengeful big brother to kick him down the front steps. Very properly done, too, from their standpoint. I've never stumbled across such a contretemps, luckily."

He worked away in silence for a time. Florian, watching him in that idle speculative mood she sometimes indulged, thought that it would be no difficult matter for a free-hearted romantic girl to be captivated by

A HEAVY COLD.

BY JOE JOY, JR.

"I'll tell you what it is, my friend, I've got a cold you see, Or, I might say in other words, A bad cold has got me. I don't do any thing but sneeze, And then when I get through, For sake of some variety I just begin anew. Already I have gone and sneezed The buttons from my coat, I've sneezed my solid front teeth out And down into my throat. I've jerked my head loose from my neck, So violent is the crash, And I have shattered every pane That's in my window-sash. I only breathe in sneezes now, Since every breath is a sneeze; My nose blows its own horn, but not With a great deal of ease. Though not addicted to the weed, It's obvious to you If anybody speaks to me, I answer with a 'tchou!' I've blown my handkerchief to shreds, I blow the lamps all out; It's awful on a pair of lungs Which are not very stout. 'Tis not a bad cold, but as good As any I have seen, I think the gentlest treatment would Be nitro-glycerine! This cold's entirely too large By several degrees; I'd like to hire a good strong man To come and help me sneeze."

The Convict's Scheme.

BY CAPT. CHARLES HOWARD.

"LILLIAN!" Rosy-cheeked and bright-eyed Lillian Dempsey turned from the deep bay window, and confronted the elderly lady who had spoken her romantic name. "Well, aunt Susan, what is it?" she asked, in her silvery tones. "Come here, girl." Lillian crossed the great parlor with a smiling countenance, for she expected a lecture from her maidenly aunt, concerning the duties of young ladies on the eve of marriage, as Lillian was; and she was surprised when the old lady extended the paper which she had been perusing, with the request that she should read the first paragraph on the fourth page. Wondering what it could be, Lillian took the journal, and felt her cheeks grow pale when her gaze fell upon the caption of the particular paragraph. "Aunt, it can not be!" she exclaimed, turning to her relative, with a fearful countenance. "That bad man can not be at large. I will not believe it!" "Let me assure you, Lillian, of the veracity of that paragraph," replied Susan confidently. "Anthony Dondore is at large, and we shall soon see him around in these parts."

Lillian's fragile form shook like the aspen leaf at her aunt's last sentence; but her eyes were mastering the brief paragraph, which ran as follows: "THE NOTORIOUS DONDORE AT LARGE!—Last night's dispatches from Auburn convey the intelligence that the notorious 'Ant.' Dondore has effected his liberation from the penitentiary. His crime is still fresh in the minds of the people of this section, and it behooves them to be on the alert for the convict, as he may make his way hither. A reward of three thousand dollars is offered for his recapture."

"Yes, aunt, we must watch for him," said Lillian, in a tone which betrayed fear. "The *Index* speaks wisely. He may come this way, for you know that he hates me: you know what he said to me as he passed me in the court-room on his way to prison."

"Yes, yes, Lillian. That was a dreadful threat, and since that hour when you told him that you would not marry him, he has been a desperate man. Girl, you might have reformed him."

For a moment Lillian Dempsey did not reply: she reread the startling paragraph, and the rose hue, which was returning to her cheeks, fled again.

"Reform Anthony Dondore?" she said, throwing a strange look into her aunt's face. "The volcano which broke from his heart that night was there when I told him 'no.' I know more about him than you, aunt Susan, and I bless the day when I refused his offer."

"Well, well; you giddy girls think that every foolish thing you do is for the best. But you rue it sometimes, and I feel that you are going to rue your words."

With this prophecy the old lady rose and left the room. Lillian returned to the window, and buried her pretty face in the elegant lace curtains.

"Oh, if I had never met that man!" she said, and then for a brief period she lived over the past, which, with its days of excitement, burned like fire in her brain.

Anthony Dondore, the escaped convict, had encountered her at a fashionable watering place, several years prior to the opening of our story. She was a wild girl of seventeen then, and he was a handsome man of five and twenty. He soon became her companion in moonlight walks and drives along the beach, and when, one night, he brought Lillian's hand in matrimony, he was shocked to hear her lips utter a refusal.

He demanded her reasons for the unexpected finale to his passionate wooing, and she calmly told him that she had learned something regarding his past life. That was enough!

Without a word, but with a look of inveterate hatred, he rose to his feet, and thus they parted.

Another man took his place—a man whom Lillian truly loved. She forgot Anthony Dondore, and he did not cross her path for a twelvemonth. Then he came with the fury of the hurricane.

One night Gerald Adams, our heroine's new lover, was shot down at her side, and Lillian recognized the assassin as he sprang from his concealment to fly. Anthony Dondore, the discarded, was found in the city, and arrested for the crime just written. He had gold, and therefore the testimony was, to no small degree, conflicting. He and his witnesses said that Gerald Adams had grossly insulted him, hence the crime. But, Lillian's testimony killed his hopes; the lawyers could not entangle her, and Anthony Dondore received a life sentence before the judicial bar!

Stone walls shall not inclose me forever," he hissed at Lillian after the trial. "I'll pay you up for this ere long, if it takes my heart's blood!"

And now that that man was free, well might Lillian Dempsey tremble. She thought of all this at the window, and

wished that the brave man to whom she had lately given her heart was at her side. But he was far away.

"Ha! they hunt the wild bird, but they shall not catch him. He flies to the work of vengeance, and ere long Lillian Dempsey shall feel his talons."

Thus murmured a bearded man, who occupied a seat in a smoking car, which was being whirled over the road toward the city wherein a beautiful girl shuddered at the remembrance of a vow made long ago.

There was nothing about the man to denote that he was a convict. Instead of a cleanly shaven face, a long black beard fell over a snowy shirt-front, and raven locks lay lightly upon his broad shoulders.

He held a paper before his face, and, as he spoke, his dark eyes rested upon the paragraph which drove the color from Lillian Dempsey's cheeks.

Despite his lengthy locks and beard, that man was Anthony Dondore, and when the iron horse paused in the great depot of N—, he seized the leather valise, which lay at his feet, and hurried from the train.

No one scrutinized him, and, with the boldness ever characteristic of the man, he read the posters which offered three thousand dollars for his arrest, before he left the station.

"I wonder if she will come," he murmured, as he walked down the spacious apartment. "That dispatch will surely deceive her, for he was in the city when I left—yes, yes, I feel that she will come."

Anthony Dondore was already playing for vengeance on the fair girl who had sent him to Sing Sing, to pay the awful penalty attached to crime in the horrors of a life-long incarceration. From the prison he had hastened to New York, and while hidden from the detectives, by companions in crime, he had learned much about Lillian's life since the trial. He knew that she was on the eve of marriage, and one day he accidentally encountered her betrothed on the street.



THE CONVICT'S SCHEME.

Instantly an audacious plot entered his brain. He hurried to a telegraph station, and sent the following dispatch to Lillian: "Will reach N— on the 9:40 train. May I meet you at the depot?"

"MAX."

He felt assured that Lillian would hasten to the station to meet her lover, and he went down on an early train.

The coming of night proved the surmises of the villain correct. Lillian hailed a hack, which, strange to say, had taken up its station near her home, and ordered the black Jehu to drive her to the depot. The man's "Yes, missus" urged the horses forward, and as Lillian settled back among the cushions she did not see the burly form that clambered to the driver's seat, and spoke to him in low tones.

The carriage rattled on for an hour, and Lillian's cheeks paled with fear. The station was near her home, and she should have been there long since.

Terribly fearful, she raised the carriage sash, and commanded the driver to halt.

He paid no attention whatever to her voice.

A moment later she spoke again, and all at once the carriage stopped.

The door flew open, and a pair of long arms encircled Lillian's body. She tried to shriek, but a hand closed over her mouth, and she was dragged from the vehicle. Then she found herself carried swiftly away, and the closing of a door told her that she was beneath a roof. Up a flight of steps the man hurried, and when Lillian was placed on her feet, she shrunk from the bearded face so near her own pale cheeks.

"Ha! I said we would meet again!" the man hissed. "Have I lied, Miss Lillian Dempsey? I am Anthony Dondore. I know you recognize my voice. You are mine now—mine, mine! That's the sweetest word I ever uttered."

A shriek from Lillian's heart told the convict that she had recognized him, and, with an oath, he turned on his heel, and left her alone.

The villain's plot had been crowned with success, and the woman whose life he would blight was completely in his power. Poor Lillian Dempsey! In a murderer's clutches, and so near her wedding-eve, too!

Three days passed away, and no tidings of Lillian's whereabouts came to the inmates of her father's house. The fashionable avenue—the whole city—was excited, and the police were busy with the mysterious case. Walker Dorsey, Lillian's lover, returned, ignorant of the fatal dispatch accredited to him. This increased the *furor*, and the hours passed without a gleam of intelligence regarding the missing girl.

The black-bearded man had suddenly disappeared, and news came that he was

Anthony Dondore, when it was too late to apprehend him.

One night a man might have been seen in the most degraded portion of the city, dogging the footsteps of another.

The watcher wore the countenance of Walker Dorsey, nicknamed "Max," from a youthful *nom de plume*, and he kept his eyes on his prey.

Suddenly the dogged one darted down an alley, and Dorsey hastened forward. He gained the dark mouth of the way, when the man confronted him.

"Dogging me, eh?" he cried. "I'll stop this forever!" and with the agility of a tiger, he darted upon the young man.

For a moment the blade flashed in the starlight, and then it was buried in Dorsey's breast!

He fell back with a shriek, and the assassin turned to fly. But, before he could penetrate the gloom, a pistol cracked, and he fell to the earth.

A minute later two policemen bent over him. As they raised him, his grayish beard dropped from his face, and the guardians of the city started back, exclaiming:

"Anthony Dondore!"

The convict's arrest spread like wildfire. An infuriated crowd assembled—a crowd that would not listen to reason.

They tore the wounded convict from the police, and in the twinkling of an eye, he was dangling from the sturdy limb of an umbrageous elm!

And when it was too late, the mob thought of Lillian Dempsey's fate. They might have wrung it from the convict; but now his tongue was silent!

The city clocks were proclaiming the hour of six, the morning following the work of the mob, when three women entered the room wherein lay the corpse of the convict.

They were inmates of the house to which the body had been brought, and placed in a plain coffin, and they had once been the friends of the wicked dead.

that had you seen her watching Mr. Caverder with those drooping-lidded eyes, whose flashing beauty had more than once stirred his heart most curiously.

Lovers Imogene had had, ever since she wore short dresses, and chivalrous school-boys contended for the honor of riding her on their sleds; lovers who had adored her, but never yet one who had as much as created the faintest wish in her heart that she might love them.

Of course Imo had many offers, but of them all, no rejected suitor could say she led them on to scorn them at last. She refused the love, refused them hers in such a kind, matter-of-fact way that they felt honored that they ever cared for her at all.

This afternoon, with the train of gray poplin dress sweeping around her, and a brilliant-hued India shawl wrapped tightly around her shoulders, a jaunty little hat, trimmed with a scarlet wing and gray velvet, on her purple-black hair, Imogene was listening to Howard Caverder with an interest she had never felt before, either in his conversation or any one else's.

What constituted the charm she was trying to find out? Was it his grave earnestness, even when speaking of commonplace affairs? his utter forgetfulness of self in all he said or did, or the rare sweetness of temper that pervaded every word and gesture?

Imogene was wondering what it was, when he turned to her his bright face, lighted by such keen, intelligent eyes.

"Miss Glendaun, I am afraid I am trespassing too long on your time. I had no idea it was so late, and you will want to dress for the hop. It is the last of the season, is it not?"

"The last. And I am not sorry, Mr. Caverder, to quit all the gayety and gossip of hotel life, and settle down quietly for the winter."

He smiled in her eyes. "Quietly for the winter? Miss Glendaun, your life this coming winter will be far

self, and no one noticed the nearer approach of the tall, black domino.

"You never heard about it, Mame, because your house is a distance from Miss Glendaun's, and mine within a mile, you know. Well—but don't any of you tell I repeated it—Miss Glendaun stole that dress she has on." A united exclamation of surprise came from behind the masques.

"It seems incredible, I know, and perhaps some people wouldn't call it stealing; but papa and mamma think it was, and of course I think so."

"Do tell it, Josie, before the music sounds for the Lancers."

Howard Caverder changed his position to one very near Miss Josie.

"You see the dress is very elegant and expensive; mamma says it must have cost at least two hundred dollars, for the lace on the ruffles is real Valenciennes. Miss Glendaun ordered it of a young lady who made such dresses, and gave her *carte blanche* as to style and trimmings, and wanted it done by the thirtieth. Of course the dressmaker was delighted with the opportunity of realizing a little profit, so she made every effort to have the dress handsome and stylish; indeed, she said she borrowed seventy dollars to buy some trimmings she hadn't."

"Then when she took the dress up to Miss Glendaun, the lady refused to pay her, on the ground that it was a day after the contract, she might take back the dress; Miss Glendaun was displeased because she was disappointed. Of course the dressmaker could not afford to have the dress thrown on her hands, and she was obliged to leave it, trusting to that lady relenting and keeping the dress, which she has done, and refuses still to pay the required amount, on the ground of delay in its receipt. There comes Max after you, Mame, for the Lancers."

And in a second the little group was scattered here and there, and only Howard Caverder stood alone, to wonder what it all meant. Was it true? *could it be true*, that Imogene Glendaun was so utterly devoid of womanly principle?

He saw her every few minutes with her fleecy white dress gleaming among darker garments; he saw the sweet graciousness of her manners, and a pain of something keener than mere disappointment trembled around his heart.

He had no desire to dance now, not even with her, for that elegant dress would be constantly suggesting something to him. He was already tired of the lights and the crashing music, so he slowly went out through the crowd to the cool night air. On the threshold he met her, leaning on the arm of a swartly-browed man; and then and there Howard Caverder awoke from the brief, sweet dream.

"I must have more money, Rob. This one I am telling you is well off, and if I can manage him—" Then the voice of Imogene Glendaun passed from his hearing, and he never heard it again; but by her own lips she had proclaimed herself an adventuress.

Short Stories from History.

Old Legends of the New World.

There is, however, a later manuscript than that indicated in our last week's paper, regarding the voyage of the Danes down the North American coast, in the tenth and eleventh centuries. This second narrative differs in many points from the story before mentioned. It is full of the most marvelous impossibilities; but its authority has been placed very high by several Danish and American writers. In truth, it has been sustained by the discovery of Norse remains in America, which are found in sufficient quantities to supply the archaeological demand. Mr. Longfellow immortalized in one of his ballads the windmill at Newport, Rhode Island, which the Danes have claimed as the Round Tower, built by some of the Greenland wanderers. The story of the lower and of "the Viking bold" is, as he says, sufficiently well established for the purposes of a ballad; though doubtless many an honest citizen, who has passed his days within sight of the Round Tower, will exclaim with Sancho, "God bless me! did I not warn you to have a care, for that it was nothing but a windmill, and nobody could mistake it who had not the like in his head?"

Besides the mill, there was found a stone in the Taumton River on which the fragment of a Runic inscription was imagined to have been discovered, concerning which some passable jokes may be read in the "Biglow Papers."

The crew, whose adventures are recorded in the later saga, are said to have sailed from Greenland to the sandy shores previously discovered, and there to have sent a Scotch man and woman, "fleece than wild beasts," to explore the inland parts, who returned in three days with grapes and an ear of wheat. Then they found an island with nesting elder ducks, which some will have to be Egg Island, near Newport. Here they passed the winter, some of the crew parting company in disgust, "at not having tasted a drop of wine," and being eventually wrecked on the coast of Ireland. The others went to exploring to the southward, until they arrived at the river and lake which the first body of settlers discovered; and here they saw the vines, and fields of corn, but were driven away by the Esquimaux, who attacked them with a fleet of skin canoes. On their northward journey they met a Uniped, or One-foot-man, "of glistering appearance," who shot a Greenland captain, and ran away across the sea. Avoiding the region of the One-foot-men, they proceeded north; but, by a sudden turn of the legend, we find them passing a third winter upon the Island of Eggs, where Snorro Thorfinnson was born, who has been claimed as an ancestor by the sculptor Thorwaldson, Prof. Finn Magnussen, and other distinguished persons. To make the story short, the wanderers sailed home from Vineland the Fair with some Esquimaux children whom they had captured. From these children they learned of the Esquimaux king, Arvidamon Valdidda, and of tribes who lived in holes underground; and the same children are the same authority for the processions of chanting priests in the Great Ireland, in which, as we have said, Humboldt was inclined to believe.

However absurd it may seem to discuss the details of this story, there is not a rock or a bay mentioned in it which has not been identified by learned enthusiasts; and it is a remarkable thing that even the most trivial names of places mentioned in the saga are found to have remained in use unaltered to the present day.

The White Suisse Dress.

BY MARY REED CROWELL.

THE golden arrows of the sunset were resting on the far-spreading branches of the linden tree, and, gleaming between the swaying leaves, just touched the proud head of Imogene Glendaun, as she stood there, a fit subject for poet, painter or sculptor. One could scarce imagine a more perfect face than hers, just now turned toward Howard Caverder, as he called her attention to the rare brilliance of the sunset; a face that few men, seeing once, would ever forget; a face, whose large, magnificent eyes, so lustrous, so shadowy, so grave, so gay, no lover of Imogene's could have told the color of.

She was a flirt; you would have known

the ball-room was one blaze of flaming lights; the gay crowd was promenading the floor to the low, sweet tones of music, when Howard Caverder, in simple domino, entered one of the side doors to find Miss Glendaun.

He had never before gone anywhere with such peculiarly pleasant anticipations as to this masquerade; he had gone, thinking of no one in the world but beautiful Imogene, whom he would ask for his own.

So, when, among a group of Italian peasant girls, he heard a voice pronounce the name of "Miss Glendaun," very naturally he listened, eagerly.

"I would know her by her hair, anyhow, wouldn't you, Mame? But, that white suisse dress is enough of itself to proclaim its wearer Miss Imogene Glendaun."

"Why, what about the dress? I never have heard."

Howard Caverder heard the curiosity in the girl's voice; he felt fully as curious him-